

## Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2001: Audacious Plan

### Chapter 2001: Audacious Plan

Zu An looked at Wang Cong, who was now completely calm; his previous fury was nowhere to be seen. Meanwhile, Pan Qiaoqiao had an ambiguous smile, but she was looking straight at him. Li Feiqing fiddled with the jade xiao instrument in his hands as he leaned against the window. He looked as if he didn't care about anything, but he was actually watching for any eavesdroppers outside while also keeping an eye on Zu An. The three of them were now practically surrounding Zu An in the middle.

Zu An reacted quickly and realized that whether it was Wang Cong or Li Feiqing, all of the animosity they had shown outside in front of the others to make their relationship seem awful was actually just a kind of cover. These individuals actually had a secret plan they were discussing on the down low! The three of them had used the pretext of the World School being offended, but they were actually here for Fang Biao's reply. He could well imagine that if Fang Biao's answer wasn't to their liking, they would immediately strike to ensure that the secret wasn't exposed.

*But just what did Fang Biao discuss with these people?!*

Zu An thought to himself that his luck was really bad. Even some random person he had ended up impersonating was involved in this kind of thing. He seemed completely calm on the surface, but his brain was moving rapidly.

These people were all a part of different factions and weren't all that close to each other. Just why did they need Fang Biao's help? Whether it was Fang Biao's strength or reputation, they were much weaker than the others. What could they need his cooperation for?

Li Feiqing in particular, according to Fatty Hu's description, was interested in the arts and was usually proud and arrogant. He flaunted himself as elegant and distinguished, looking down on people like Fang Biao who used drugs to take advantage of women the most.

When he saw that Zu An was still quiet, Wang Cong got a bit impatient and snapped, "Why aren't you saying anything?"

Zu An thought of something and quickly made up his mind. He replied, "Sorry for being blunt, but I still know my limitations. Whether it's cultivation or other factors, I can't compare to you guys at all. What if you guys stab me in the back? There's nothing I can do at all."

It seemed as if he was saying a lot, but he actually wasn't saying anything meaningful. He wanted to use such ambiguous words to fish out more information from these people, which would help him guess what they were talking about.

When they heard what he said, the other three couldn't help but smile, remarking, "Everyone always says Fang Biao is the most arrogant and conceited out of the bunch, but it seems that's not entirely the case."

Zu An harrumphed, pretending to be annoyed.

Wang Cong said, "You don't need to worry about that. We're all in the same boat here, and you are still the Yin Yang Path Master's son. Why would we take the risk of doing something to you? If we were exposed, we'd be finished."

Zu An frowned slightly. He still couldn't really tell what their plan was. He said, "Hmph, that's hard to say."

Li Feiqing was getting a bit annoyed. He had never been fond of Fang Biao in the first place. He said, "You keep stalling back and forth. Are you going to refuse?"

Zu An could tell that Li Feiqing was already itching to attack. Zu An naturally wasn't scared of him, but he was quite interested in what plans this group had, and just why all of this had ended up becoming so mysterious.

"What are you in such a rush for? If you want me to agree, you have to throw in some more benefits first," Zu An said. Judging from the earlier conversation, he'd learned that at the very least, these three were allies. They seemed to want Fang Biao to join them too.

"We already told you what benefits you'd receive. Is young master Biao still unsatisfied?" Pan Qiaoqiao asked with a smile as she moved a bit closer. It seemed as if she was about to lean her head on his shoulder.

Zu An only tapped his feet and made his chair slide slightly backward. He brought Zhang Zitong with him to avoid making contact with her, saying, "It's not enough."

Pan Qiaoqiao hadn't expected her charm techniques to not be enough. A hint of surprise appeared in her eyes as she remarked, "It seems we've underestimated young master Biao."

Zu An picked up his teacup in an unhurried manner and took a sip as if he were an elegant and wise man.

Li Feiqing harrumphed. "You've already been bullied by your two brothers enough, right? And the concubines at your side are frequently taken by them. What benefits are there for you in the Yin Yang Path anyway? You only get the leftovers after the two of them have their pick. If we were to put it nicely, you're the Yin Yang Path's third young master, but if we were to be more blunt, your position is no different from that of a servant."

"That's enough!" Zu An snapped. Even though he didn't actually care, he still had to express the anger Fang Biao would have shown.

"Feiqing, you're going a bit too far," Pan Qiaoqiao said as she gave Li Feiqing a reproachful look and immediately tried to smooth things over.

Wang Cong also said, "Even though brother Li's words are a bit direct, they aren't entirely without reason. If things continue like this, when will brother Fang ever make a name for yourself? If I'm not mistaken, your second brother was here to demand that silver token envoy of yours, right?"

Zu An remained silent, but his unhappy expression said enough.

Wang Cong continued, "If you help us conclude this affair, you'll have us as your friends to support you. If we were to boast a bit, we still have some say within our respective schools and paths. Also, with a sister-in-law like Qiaoqiao to assist you in the background, you'd definitely be living a much better life."

Pan Qiaoqiao said with an annoyed laugh, "You're so annoying! Nothing's even started yet; what sister-in-law..."

Zu An was startled. *Sister-in-law?* He already had a suspicion.

"These are all some empty promises. I need something more tangible," Zu An said with a gloomy expression.

"What tangible things do you want?" Wang Cong asked with a frown.

Zu An smiled and said, "I'm from the Yin Yang Path, so of course I need a good pill cauldron. Your World School and Freedom Path can send your prettiest junior sisters over here and I'll be more than grateful too. And big sis Pan, if you can personally exchange some pointers with me on Yin Yang Path dao, what more could I ask for?"

"You scoundrel!" Li Feiqing exclaimed furiously. "Our Freedom Path doesn't have many people to begin with, and the most beautiful female disciples are constantly surrounded by attention. How could we possibly give them to you?!"

Wang Cong also sneered. "Brother Fang, aren't you asking for too much?"

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**You have successfully trolled Wang Cong for +388 +388 +388...**

Pan Qiaoqiao moved closer to Zu An's side. Even though she was smiling, her expression was completely cold. She replied, "Young master Biao wishes to engage in pair cultivation with me? You're quite brave, aren't you? You clearly know that there's a chance of me becoming your sister-in-law, and yet you're not scared of your big brother flaying you alive?"

Zu An smiled and said, "It's not as if I'm asking you to be with me on your wedding night; you can come to me later. How will he even know?"

"Enough. Why don't you take a look in the mirror first? Do you think there's a chance?" Li Feiqing snapped impatiently. "Come up with something more realistic."

"Then just give me a few dozen chests of immortal-grade ki stones. And give me some of your branch's cultivation methods to sift through," Zu An said nonchalantly.

Pan Qiaoqiao chuckled and remarked, "This was probably your real objective, right? It seems everyone underestimated you."

Li Feiqing and Wang Cong also narrowed their eyes. They also realized that they had let their emotions get carried away by this guy.

“You can praise me all you want, but I’m not lowering my price,” Zu An said with a snort.

Pan Qiaoqiao didn’t get annoyed and said, “Immortal-grade ki stones aren’t too realistic. How about this? Everyone will give you ten chests of heaven-grade ki stones each, and we’ll each teach you one of our branch’s special techniques. How about that?” When she saw that Zu An was about to say something else, she added ahead of time, “Young master Biao, you should know when to stop. This is already the most we can compromise with.”

When he saw the dangerous glint in their eyes, Zu An knew this was pretty much the limit. He said, “I guess it’s fine. But I want it now.”

Wang Cong chuckled and replied, “What if you take the stuff and go back on the deal? That’s why we can only give you the ki stones now. As for the skills, we’ll teach them to you once the affair is complete.”

Zu An pretended to be unhappy, but he still agreed in the end. “Fine.”

He was currently lacking these resources for pill and artifact refinement, so he hadn’t expected to have this kind of unexpected gain. As for the skills these people were talking about, he didn’t care much about them at all.

The three exchanged a look, then each took out ten chests of heaven-grade ki stones and left them in the room.

Zu An was a bit surprised. It seemed these people had already prepared beforehand! Otherwise, why would they carry so many ki stones with them?

“Is it really fine to just leave them here? What if your two older brothers just steal them? We won’t be giving you more if that happens,” Li Feiqing said with a sneer.

Zu An said nonchalantly, “That’s not something you need to worry yourself about.”

Wang Cong stepped forward to ease the tensions, saying, “Young master Biao has already agreed, which is a happy thing for all of us. Let’s discuss the concrete details now.”

Zu An nodded and replied, "Alright, tell me about your plans."

He was even starting to admire himself a bit. All this time, he hadn't even had any idea what these people wanted to do, and yet he'd ended up getting on good terms with them. He'd even seized the advantage in the discussion.

Sure enough, no one suspected him and Li Feiqing said, "Fang Long is getting married the day after tomorrow. The new bride will be delivered from the Heavenly Devil School to the Yin Yang Path. Fang Long will be greeting the guests at the feast, so the bride will be all alone. That's when we'll strike."

Zu An was startled. It was just as he'd suspected! However, he hadn't expected the marriage date to be the day after tomorrow. Thank goodness he'd decided to move quickly! He definitely hadn't thought Qiu Honglei would agree to this marriage, but people had all been saying that Fang Long was marrying the saintess, so something had clearly happened that made Honglei have no choice to agree; or perhaps she had been forced to agree.

*But now I'm here, so of course I can protect Honglei.*

Just then, Wang Cong said, "When the time comes, we can find some way to befuddle Fang Long and get him so drunk that he has no idea what is going on. Young master Biao, you should find a way to remove the Yin Yang Path's guards, after which brother Li will use that chance to bring the saintess away. You can then take big sister Pan into the bridal room to take the saintess' place. Then, there should be no problems at all."

"No problem," the others all answered with looks of excitement.

Zu An's thoughts moved quickly. Li Feiqing was infatuated with Qiu Honglei, so it made sense why he was willing to go through such dangers to chase his goddess. Meanwhile, Pan Qiaoqiao liked Fang Long and was envious of Qiu Honglei. Not only did she want to marry her crush, she also wanted to take Qiu Honglei's place in the Heavenly Devil School. Her willingness to take this risk was also understandable.

But why was Wang Cong getting involved? The whole affair would be exposed the next day. Once people began to point fingers and deliver punishments, there was no way he'd be able to get away with it!

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## Chapter 2002: Conspiracy

Zu An was shocked and asked, “Why are we switching the bride here at the Yin Yang Path? Why aren’t you switching the bride at the Heavenly Devil School?”

Pan Qiaoqiao shook her head and replied, “You think I don’t want a complete wedding? It’s just too hard; Qiu Honglei has too many guards around her.”

Zu An voiced his surprise. “Could it be that the saintess is being detained?” He knew he was taking too big of a risk by saying that. If his words ended up exposing him, that would become a huge problem.

But fortunately, the others didn’t suspect him. Li Feiqing harrumphed and answered, “Of course she’s being forced. I refuse to believe that the saintess would actually like a scoundrel like Fang Long.” He paused for a moment, then added, “I didn’t say that to badmouth you.”

Li Feiqing probably felt that speaking in such a way about someone from the Yin Yang Path in front of an ally from the same place was a bit unreasonable.

Zu An didn’t really mind. He heard Pan Qiaoqiao add, “But she did personally say that she’d agree to this marriage. I was there too. Many people from the Heavenly Devil School heard her.”

Zu An frowned slightly. It seemed that Qiu Honglei had really ended up encountering a problem she couldn’t solve.

Wang Cong said, “Don’t think about such trivial things and just move according to plan. The only time the guards will be more lax is once everyone has had their fill of food and drink.”

“Alright.” After discussing all the details, the others left in their respective directions.

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When they left, Zu An put all of the ki stones into the Brilliant Glass Bead. Then, he unsealed Zhang Zitong's acupoints and woke her up.

When she woke up, Zhang Zitong's first reaction was to check her clothes.

Zu An was a bit stunned. He asked, "Are you really that worried about me doing something to you?"

Zhang Zitong's face reddened. She answered, "It's not that I'm scared that sir will do something to me, but rather that other people might have. This is a den of evildoers, after all."

Zu An was speechless. He could only change the topic and give her a summary of what had happened.

Zhang Zitong clicked her tongue in amazement, saying, "I didn't expect the affairs of the Devil Sect to be so complicated. It seems the various branches also have quite a bit of infighting between them. I feel that this is a good opportunity, though. We can use this chance to completely throw the Devil Sect into chaos. It should be even better if we can make the branches fight against each other."

"By the way, should I leave and scout out the situation with the guards first? That way, it'll become easier to coordinate with those people when it comes to switching out the bride."

Zu An shook his head and said, "No, I have other plans."

"Huh? You're not going to take advantage of such a good opportunity? What kind of wonderful plan does sir have?" Zhang Zitong asked, sounding really interested.

Zu An didn't reply and said, "I need to go out on a trip. Stay here and be careful." After thinking about it for a bit, he took out a talisman and added, "If you encounter any dangers you can't handle, activate this talisman. I'll immediately come to save you." This was the Yin Yang Path, after all; the place was extremely unfavorable for women. He was worried that something could happen to her.

Zhang Zitong carefully stowed the talisman away. She grinned and said, "Sir really does care about me."



"I just don't want you to die mysteriously here for no reason." Zu An harrumphed.

"Don't worry. I am a silver token envoy, so I'll have no problems taking care of myself, at least. Even that Fang Hu who came here earlier is someone I can handle," Zhang Zitong said while sticking out her chest.

"Who was it that was almost done in by Fang Biao not too long ago? This Fang Hu is much more formidable," Zu An reminded her.

Zhang Zitong's face reddened. She said, "That's because I didn't expect their drugs to be so strong. Sir, please don't worry. I've already learned from my experience. Their despicable drugs won't work on me anymore."

"That's good," Zu An said with a nod, and then he vanished into the distance.

When she saw him leave, Zhang Zitong took out the talisman and caressed it with her fingers. Her cheeks turned pink. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking, but she suddenly released a long sigh.

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Meanwhile, after Zu An left the room, he headed straight up the mountain. Along the way, the security wasn't as strict as when the new disciples had first gone up the mountain. There were Devil Sect disciples everywhere, and these disciples all had decent cultivation ranks. If any outsiders entered, they would likely be quickly noticed and surrounded. Even so, with Zu An's current cultivation, he was able to notice them while they were still far away and easily avoid them ahead of time. Together with how quickly he moved, he didn't alert anyone along the way.

The architecture of the buildings on the mountain was actually extremely complex. In many areas, it was simply like a maze. The reason why that wasn't an issue for Zu An was that he had secretly left a spiritual imprint on Pan Qiaoqiao's body. Even though people like her were all well-known figures from the Devil Sect's younger generation, the difference in cultivation ranks between them and Zu An was just far, far too great. There was no way they would notice his movements.

He continued to search for that weak imprint. Even though he had never been to the Lake of Hatred before, he was still able to accurately locate the Heavenly Devil School.

In truth, Zhang Zitong was right. According to those people's plans, beating them at their own game would save the most time, but how could he really let Qiu Honglei and Fang Long go through with their marriage? Even if he knew it was fake, he couldn't let it go through!

He quickly found Pan Qiaoqiao. Since he was already in the Heavenly Devil School, he prepared to look for Qiu Honglei. However, he suddenly noticed Pan Qiaoqiao look all around her, seemingly on guard against people following her. Only when she was sure that nobody was following her did she sneak into a courtyard.

Zu An was surprised, and decided to go and see what kinds of schemes this woman was up to. He secretly entered the courtyard. For some reason, there weren't many Devil Sect disciples inside.

Suddenly, he heard some strange sounds, followed by a man and a woman's conversation.

"You've really become sexier and sexier..."

"Master, you're so amazing! My soul is about to ascend because of you~"

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Zu An was stunned. How could he still not know what was going on when he heard Pan Qiaoqiao's assertive words?

His divine sense quickly scanned the area. An elder dressed in embroidered robes was holding the enchanting Pan Qiaoqiao. The two were wrapped around each other like snakes and engaging in intense 'interactions'.

Zu An immediately felt as if he were in the middle of a storm. Just before, in that room, this woman had been talking about how much she liked Fang Long, and was willing to take such a huge risk to become his new bride. And yet she'd immediately run off to do this with another man?

*How can she face Fang Long? How can she face all of those people who believed her? On top of that, judging from their conversation, it sounds like these two are master and disciple. What a villainess!*

He didn't have any interest in eavesdropping on their business. Either way, it was that Fang guy's green hat. He was about to leave when the elder in the room suddenly asked, "How is the plan going?"

Zu An was surprised. He could only stop and continue to listen for the time being.

"Pft... Mmm, that stupid brat Fang Biao already agreed, but we had no choice but to pay twenty chests of heaven-grade ki stones to make him agree. Master, you have to compensate... Ah!"

"Sure, sure, sure. Your master will compensate you right now. All you've done for your master is worth far more than these heaven-grade ki stones."

"You're so annoying~"

Zu An was completely speechless. This woman really was incredible. She'd immediately doubled what she used up.

The intermittent conversations continued from time to time.

"Who has joined in thus far?"

"The Freedom Path's Li Feiqing and the World Path's Wang Cong. However, the Treasure Hunter Path's Fatty Hu doesn't seem to be too interested."

"Hmph, the Treasure Hunter Path has already declined. That Fatty Hu is only interested in tombs and female corpses. The saintess' beauty has nothing to do with him."

"You're so annoying! How can you think about that Qiu girl when you're with me right now?"

"Who says I want her? I was just mentioning her."

"Hmph, you can't hide it from me. Your body clearly became a bit more excited when you were talking about her."

"Ahem, that was something else... Regardless, we don't need to worry about Fatty Hu. The Treasure Hunter Path isn't that relevant now anyway."

"Then I'll go and ask around the Secret Path and Pear Path to see if anyone else will join. As for the Unfeeling Path's Ding Xia, I wouldn't dare to ask him."

That person is so cold, and the way he looks at me isn't as if he's looking at a pretty woman, but rather at a corpse."

"Ding Xia is Lu Sanyuan's precious disciple, and his cultivation is around Qiu Honglei's. The only thing he's interested in is his master, and he has no interest in any other plans. You don't need to look for him."

"Oh, what does master really want to do? I'm a bit confused even now."

"Heh, I just want to use this chance to gather some of these risk-takers and root them out in one go. Otherwise, they might not fall for anything so easily in the future."

"Master is full of clever schemes after all. However, once that slut Qiu Honglei is swapped out, does master plan on kindly accepting her?"

"That's not something you need to worry about. There'll be people to deal with it when the time comes."

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Zu An could more or less guess the elder's identity from their conversation. He was most likely Yun Jianyue's junior brother, the Devil Sect's Elder Xi. It seemed that he was scheming something big, but Wang Cong and Li Feiqing were completely in the dark about it. He likely wanted to use the chance to beat down the other factions' strength so he could stand out alone. However, would a trifling elder really have such great ambitions?

As he continued to listen, he discovered that the two of them didn't talk about anything else meaningful, and were only immersed in their passion. He thus quietly left.

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Zu An decided to find Qiu Honglei next. After circling the Heavenly Devil School, he grabbed a few Devil Sect disciples for questioning. There was nothing they wouldn't say in front of Daji.

Soon after, he arrived at a secluded courtyard he'd found out about from the information he gathered. Suddenly, he heard beautiful music being played on a flute; however, it seemed to carry a hint of frustration and sadness. Zu An was really happy, because he could tell that it was Qiu Honglei's flute music.

However, he wasn't in a rush to go in, because he discovered that there were countless guards present. The security was even tighter than when he had been heading up the mountain before. On top of that, many of the hidden guards even had warning tools. If they detected an enemy, they would immediately be alerted, so there was no way for even those with high cultivation ranks to secretly infiltrate this place.

Even so, that was no issue for Zu An. He summoned Daji; now that she had nine ranks of cultivation, though she couldn't restrain the highest-level cultivators, these guards were easy enough to deal with.

The guards quickly noticed a woman in fluttering white clothes slowly approach. They held their weapons with nervous expressions, and the hidden sentries prepared to sound their alarms. And yet, when they saw her appearance, all of them were stupefied. How could there be such a beautiful woman in this world? More importantly, there was a kind of unique charm to her appearance that made others unable to help but cherish her, want to protect her, and do anything for her. The white-clad woman gently stroked the lute in her arms. Invisible sound waves spread out, and the guards' expressions became blank.

"Who's there?!" several voices suddenly cried in alarm. A few female disciples ran out from inside.

Unfortunately, Daji's skills were useless against women! When those disciples saw the situation in the courtyard, their expressions changed. They immediately fired warning arrows into the air.

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#### Chapter 2003: Rebellion

When they saw the warning arrows fire into the sky, the female disciples all sighed in relief. This kind of arrow would immediately release a shrill noise, and others from the sect would rush over to provide reinforcements. At that point, any intruder would then choose to retreat, and they would thus be safe.

However, their smiles quickly froze. Why didn't they hear the alarms? They reflexively raised their heads and saw that the air seemed to be a bit warped. They didn't see the fiery streaks they expected after firing their arrows; rather,

the projectiles had stopped after moving just a few feet from where they were. Still, even that distance was supposed to be enough to create a loud and shrill noise!

They could see that there were some ripples around the fire at the very tip of the arrow, which likely came from the sounds they were expecting. However, those sound waves seemed to be gripped by an invisible hand and restrained in place. They couldn't move at all.

Just what kind of incredible skill was this?!

All of the disciples present were carefully selected. They immediately realized that they were facing an enemy that they absolutely couldn't win against. They reflexively wanted to run, but soon after, they saw a man's face. He looked completely ordinary, like someone they wouldn't even give a second look to if they bumped into him; and yet, right now, they were incredibly scared of him.

After that... There was nothing after that. The female disciples' bodies went limp and they collapsed to the ground.

Zu An closed his fist, and the sounds those arrows were releasing were sucked into a single black point before disappearing into nothing. Fortunately, he had been prepared for such a situation, or else things would've gotten troublesome.

He suddenly thought of something and looked up. He saw a beautiful figure seated by the window on the second floor, looking at him vigilantly. He was really happy. With a kick of his feet, he flew up to the second floor, calling, "Honglei."

However, Qiu Honglei immediately rushed backward a few meters and a short blade appeared out of her sleeves. She said, "You're not Fang Biao. Who are you?!"

She naturally knew the Yin Yang Path's Fang Biao, but there was no way he had this level of cultivation.

Zu An realized that he hadn't changed his appearance and quickly restored his original appearance. His voice changed back as well as he said, "Honglei, it's me."

“It really is you?” Qiu Honglei asked, still a bit apprehensive. After all, there were many people in the sect who knew some treacherous methods that would allow them to transform into Ah Zu. Of course, the man in front of her had almost no flaws to pick out.

Zu An was a bit speechless. He vanished and reappeared at her side to hug her, asking, “Are you sure now?”

When she sensed his special aura and heard certain secrets that only the two of them knew, Qiu Honglei’s tense body finally relaxed. She was shocked and happy, asking, “Ah Zu, I’m not dreaming, am I?” She clung to him so tightly that she almost seemed scared he would just suddenly run away.

Zu An stroked her hair while feeling a bit of pity, saying, “Honglei, I’m late. You ended up being so scared...”

Qiu Honglei was so moved that before he even finished, she got on her tiptoes and kissed him. All of her longing from being separated for so long was poured into that one kiss.

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When their lips finally parted, Qiu Honglei’s face was a bit red. She bit her lip and pouted playfully, saying, “Your kissing skill has improved again. I wonder which woman you’ve been practicing on?”

Zu An was speechless. Since both Chuyan and Manman had learned Kiss of the Goddess, it had also made his skill improve as a result. Of course, there was no way he would ever say that out loud.

Fortunately, Qiu Honglei didn’t really get upset and quickly changed the subject, asking, “How did you get here?”

“I couldn’t contact you guys, so I was worried that something could have happened, and I made a trip here,” Zu An explained.

The two of them sat by the bed. Qiu Honglei huddled up against him like a kitten. When she heard that, she smiled sweetly and replied, “It seems our hearts really are linked as one... The situation is a bit tricky. By the way, how were you able to take on Fang Biao’s appearance? That guy is the most annoying of them all.”

As someone who was also a part of the Devil Sect, she clearly understood the personalities of the people from the Yin Yang Path very well.

“I didn’t know where the Lake of Hatred was, so I wanted to find some way of making my way in...” Zu An said, then gave her a rough summary of everything that had happened.

Qiu Honglei was a bit apologetic, saying, “It’s all my fault. I should have told you how to come here before; that way, you wouldn’t have had to go through so much trouble.”

Zu An smiled and said, “That’s not your fault either. After being here for a few days, I’ve learned that your disciples need to carry out a blood oath and can’t tell outsiders where the general headquarters are, or else they’ll immediately perish.”

That was part of the reason why the Lake of Hatred had somehow never been exposed even after hundreds, or perhaps even over a thousand, years.

Qiu Honglei smiled and said, “We can’t tell outsiders, but you’re not an outsider. At first, I wanted to wait until we... ahem, and then I would tell you.”

When he saw her face redden and Qiu Honglei acting adorably shy, Zu An couldn’t help but hug her and kiss her again.

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Fortunately, a while later, they remembered what was important at the moment. Their lips parted reluctantly and Zu An asked, “Honglei, just what happened to you two? Those guards outside seem to be keeping you under house arrest.”

When she heard what he said, Qiu Honglei recovered a bit of clear-headedness and said, “Actually, I was in the dark the whole time too. Half a month ago or so, when I came out of my secluded cultivation, I discovered that something wasn’t quite right. I couldn’t meet with master at all.

“I thought she had also decided to focus on her cultivation and gone into seclusion, so I didn’t treat it as a big deal, but later, I discovered that many people were secretly monitoring me. I wanted to contact some of my master’s trusted aides, but all of the elders, hall masters, and others who were loyal to master had all been transferred far away from the general headquarters. That



was when I realized something major had happened. I didn't care about what those guards said and barged straight into master's place of seclusion, only to find that she wasn't there."

Zu An was alarmed and hurriedly asked, "Where did she go?"

Qiu Honglei shook her head and said, "I didn't know at the time either. Later, the Yin Yang Path Master heard what had happened and wanted to restrain me, but he hadn't expected me to have learned 'Dance Offering to the Universe'. He realized that it was dangerous to continue trying, and hurriedly told me to stop and try to negotiate with him."

Zu An was a bit surprised. 'Dance Offering to the Universe' was the foremost of Immortal Ruler Baopu's seven skills, a skill with the ability to join the heavens and the earth. Thank goodness Honglei had received the skill to protect her when she was in the secret dungeon, or else the consequences would have been too horrible to even imagine. After all, this was one of the Devil Sect's four overlords, someone on par with Yun Jianyue, who also had grandmaster rank cultivation.

"At first, I didn't want to talk to him, but he took out one of my master's keepsakes and said that they had my master captive. I was worried that something would happen to master, so I decided to negotiate for the time being," Qiu Honglei continued.

"Big si... Ahem, did your master fall into their clutches?" Zu An asked; his expression changed a bit.

Qiu Honglei shook her head slightly and said, "That isn't too likely. With master's abilities, the Yin Yang Path Master shouldn't be capable of that. According to my investigations and deductions, master was most likely trapped somewhere by them. They couldn't capture master, but master probably can't break free either."

Zu An couldn't help but say with a sigh of amazement, "You actually managed to find out so much!"

Qiu Honglei spread her hands, and a yellow talisman glowing with red light calmly floated into the air. She replied, "Did you forget about this talisman you gave me last time? I wanted to find out where master was, but that place seemed to be blocked by something, so that's why I wasn't able to find out the

exact location. But what I'm certain of is that it's still within the scope of our general headquarters.”

“So that's why you agreed to marry Fang Long, so you could try to find out about your master's whereabouts that way?” Zu An asked with a frown.

Qiu Honglei looked at him with a big smile, saying, “Oh my, your jealous expression is so cute.”

Zu An harrumphed in dissatisfaction.

Qiu Honglei explained, “Don't worry. How could I really marry someone like that? I just wanted to appease them for now and gather more intelligence. For example, the things I told you about earlier were things I've found out since then.”

Zu An's expression finally eased up a bit. He said, “With your master's cultivation, that Yin Yang Path Master is definitely not her match. Just who else could have joined in on this?”

He understood Yun Jianyue's cultivation better than anyone. With her strength, she could protect herself even against an earth immortal. Becoming an earth immortal herself was also just around the corner. The Yin Yang Path Master was just a grandmaster. How could he possibly do anything to her?

“That's right, there are definitely more people who participated,” Qiu Honglei said, her gaze turning cold. “If I'm not mistaken, there's also the Vice Sect Master Lu Sanyuan.”

“Lu Sanyuan?” Zu An exclaimed in shock. The two most famous individuals in the Devil Sect were the Devil Sect Master Yun Jianyue, and the leader of the ‘volunteer army’ Lu Sanyuan.

To a certain degree, the court was a bit more scared of Lu Sanyuan. After all, he led a hundred-thousand-man rebel army and roamed from place to place, defeating countless armies of the court.

Qiu Honglei voiced her agreement. “Lu Sanyuan is the vice sect master, as well as the leader of the Unfeeling Path. His status in the sect is extraordinary. At first, master didn't really mind having a peaceful coexistence with him, and she even provided him with all kinds of resources to aid in building that volunteer army.

“However, after Violet Mountain’s events, master suddenly discovered that Lu Sanyuan had led the volunteer army nearby to coordinate with the various factions in a fight against Zhao Han, and yet even as the sect master, she didn’t know a thing about it. She planned to investigate the situation properly when she came back this time, but that Lu bastard actually struck first.

“Even so, we just never expected the Yin Yang Path Master to actually have been roped in by him too. After all, the Yin Yang Path has always been on good terms with our Heavenly Devil School.”

Zu An had a strange expression as he said, “I fear that it might not just be the Yin Yang Path. I think even quite a few members of the Heavenly Devil School have been roped in, such as that Elder Xi.” Then, he told her about what he had discovered between Pan Qiaoqiao and Elder Xi.

Qiu Honglei was shocked. She said, “Pan Qiaoqiao has always been jealous of me and has always felt that she isn’t inferior to me in any way. Still, I never expected her to actually dare to betray the Heavenly Devil School!” Her thoughts moved quickly, and she came to a conclusion, saying, “It must be because master has long been trying to restrict the actions of the Yin Yang Path, not permitting them to steal the womenfolk of honest people, and she also added all sorts of rules to the Heavenly Devil School that caused their dissatisfaction. That has to be why they were so easily swayed by Lu Sanyuan.”

Zu An got up and said, “Since we know the ringleader, I’ll head over and settle our debt now.”

Qiu Honglei immediately grabbed him and said, “You can’t! We don’t know the situation with master yet. What if they’re driven into a corner and do something out of desperation? That would be really bad!”

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Chapter 2004: Eliminated

Zu An knew that what she said did make some sense. As of late, she had tried all kinds of methods, but still hadn’t been able to find where exactly Yun Jianyue was. With Yun Jianyue’s cultivation, it shouldn’t have been too difficult to get away even if she was completely surrounded. And yet, in that case, she

would have contacted him a long time ago. However, he had no information at all.

It was probably as Qiu Honglei speculated - that she was trapped somewhere and both parties had entered a stalemate. The attackers couldn't continue, but Yun Jianyue couldn't escape either. But if he really pressured these rebels too far and they decided to just bring the whole place down as a final struggle, Yun Jianyue would never be able to escape. He couldn't afford to take that risk.

"Besides, I couldn't find any trace of Lu Sanyuan and the others either, nor do I know just which people are colluding with him. That's why I needed something like a marriage, where almost all of the major members of the sect would attend. Then, it'd be easier to catch them all in one go," Qiu Honglei said.

"But even if it's just an act, there's no way I can really let you marry that Fang Long.," Zu An said gravely.

Qiu Honglei smiled sweetly before replying, "Isn't that easy enough? Can't we just have someone take my place?"

Zu An thought of something and asked, "You're talking about that person?"

Qiu Honglei nodded. The two of them laughed in mutual understanding. However, she said, "Even so, there's another problem. Those female disciples saw you when you came in here. Even if we kill them, Lu Sanyuan and the others will have noticed that something is wrong."

Zu An smiled and said, "Don't worry. That's not a big problem at all." After saying that, he took out some Worries Be Gone Rosemary and gave the female disciples a sniff.

Qiu Honglei asked curiously, "What kind of drug is this?"

Zu An told her about the Worries Be Gone Rosemary. Qiu Honglei immediately protested playfully, "You always have so many kinds of drugs on you. It's really a shame that you didn't join the Yin Yang Path."

Zu An's face heated up and he said, "It's just to research the medicinal properties. Isn't this the perfect time to use such a drug?"

As long as he controlled the dosage, it wouldn't make their desires go out of control. At the same time, it could make them forget about what had just happened.

Qiu Honglei harrumphed. "Either way, you're not allowed to use this on other women."

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle, replying, "Then does that mean that I can use it on you?"

A flirtatious look flickered across Qiu Honglei's face and she said, "You don't even need to use it on me."

Suddenly, her eyes flickered and she noticed Daji standing quietly next to her. She was incredibly moved, saying, "Even though this isn't the first time I've met her, she really is beautiful... Also, for some reason, I feel a sense of familiarity from her." She immediately added, "You're not allowed to do anything weird to her."

Zu An impatiently retorted, "Am I that kind of person?"

"Look at how pretty this woman is. I refuse to believe that you've never been tempted before." Qiu Honglei harrumphed.

Zu An sensibly chose not to continue talking about the subject with her. The two of them discussed their next plans again, and then he quickly left.

Without Daji controlling them, the dazed guards all returned to normal. They all looked a bit confused, but when they saw that the saintess was still inside, they sighed in relief and didn't think about anything else.

...

Meanwhile, after Zu An left, he still felt a bit unsatisfied. He secretly looked around the Lake of hatred. Firstly, he wanted a good idea of the Devil Sect General Headquarters' layout, and secondly, he wanted to find traces of Yun Jianyue. He expanded his vast divine sense and also used the jade badge's little creatures to aid in his search.

Unfortunately, even after searching the entire place three times, he still couldn't find Yun Jianyue. If it not for Qiu Honglei's glowing red yellow

talisman that showed that Yun Jianyue was indeed still at the Lake of Hatred, even he would have suspected that she had already left.

Helpless to do anything else, he could only return to the Yin Yang Path for the time being. Of course, he changed back into Fang Biao's appearance, and he shamefully found another unlucky soul to use the Kawaii Waifu Voice Changer on.

"Motherf\*cker... This appearance-changing skill really isn't something meant for a human to do," Zu An muttered, still cursing as he returned to Fang Biao's courtyard.

When she saw him return, Zhang Zitong welcomed him happily. "Si... Master!"

Zu An said in annoyance, "There are no outsiders here, so just call me sir."

"No way! What if I get used to that and make a mistake in front of other people?" Zhang Zitong said with a firm expression.

Zu An frowned, but he let her do what she wanted. He had to admit that being called 'master' by a beauty with such wonderful legs was a pretty good feeling.

"What gains has master reaped from this trip?" Zhang Zitong asked.

Zu An naturally couldn't tell her everything; he only told her about what he needed her to do on the day of the wedding.

Zhang Zitong listened extremely patiently and said, "Master, don't worry. I'll definitely complete my mission."

"You have to be careful. The Devil Sect is full of powerful cultivators," Zu An warned.

Zhang Zitong felt warm when she heard his words of concern. When she looked at him, her expression also became gentler.

Now that they had finished talking about important matters, the room immediately became quiet. Both of them felt a slightly awkward atmosphere settle in.

"It's already late, so you should go next door for some rest," Zu An said.

However, who could have thought that Zhang Zitong didn't leave at all? She replied in a low voice, "Did master forget that with Fang Biao's personality, there's no way he would let an incredible beauty like me leave?"

Zu An was a bit speechless. He said, "Everyone knows he's just finished using the Eighteen Spring Winds. How could he possibly still have those thoughts?"

Zhang Zitong's face turned a bit red. She replied, "Even if... Even if he was tired, he'd still want to have women in his arms when he's sleeping. That's a way of showing off in and of itself."

"You seem to understand these kinds of bastards quite well." Zu An said, a bit surprised.

"I used to chase down scoundrels all across the world of warriors and interacted quite a bit with these kinds of people, so that's why I understand their personalities," Zhang Zitong said with a sigh. Because of her beauty, she had frequently been sent out to lure snakes out of their holes. Since she had always been fully prepared and had her colleagues to coordinate with her, it had always led to success after success. And yet, who could have thought that she would end up being done in by Fang Biao? It was all because of that weird drug being too strong.

Zu An said, "Then you can just stay here. You can sleep on the bed."

Zhang Zitong's heart was pounding.

*What does Sir Eleven mean? Does he want me to sleep with him?*

*Should I refuse, or...*

Before she even thought it through, she already reflexively replied, "Okay."

Suddenly, the door to the courtyard was shoved open and Fang Hu called out mockingly from far away, "Third brother, your second brother is here to see you!"

He instantly appeared by the door, burning with anxiety. A strong smell of alcohol wafted over even from far away. Even though he said that he was here to see his third brother, his eyes never even landed on Zu An, and instead greedily sized up Zhang Zitong.

*Those legs really are incredible... I'm sure they could crush a person to death.*

"Old third, why don't you go out for a stroll? I drank too much and need to stay at your place to catch my breath," Fang Hu said as he released a gassy burp, waving his hand at Zu An as if he were ordering a servant.

A hint of anger flickered across Zhang Zitong's eyes. She naturally knew what he was really thinking. This man even publicly stole his younger brother's women! He really was scum among scum.

Zu An indifferently said, "I believe that the one who should leave is you."

"Oh my, our brat must be itching for a beating!" Fang Hu's expression immediately changed as he said, "If you don't want to be obedient, don't blame this big brother for not giving you any face."

He pushed toward Zu An while saying that. An intimidating aura began to spread from his body. He knew that his third brother was a sheep in wolf's clothing. If they really fought, it wouldn't make a difference even if he only used one hand.

*Since this kid doesn't want to respect his seniors, I'm going to screw his woman right in front of his face!*

He was getting excited just from the thought of it.

*Hm? He should already be starting to get scared around now. Why is he still so calm?*

*Wait, when did this white-clad woman suddenly appear? And she's so beautiful, almost like a goddess from the heavens...*

As he looked at her, his eyes became unfocused, and he stood still in a daze.

Zhang Zitong was also amazed.

*Sir Eleven's female subordinate is too amazing! She easily restrained this insufferably arrogant Fang Hu!*

*More importantly, she's so beautiful, beautiful to the point of causing despair. I can't even bring myself to feel an ounce of jealousy toward her.*



*But even so, my legs should be longer than hers. It's a pity that she's wearing a dress and we can't compare with each other.*

Zu An didn't know she was making such comparisons. He asked Fang Hu, "Do you know where Sect Master Yun is?"

"Shouldn't Sect Master Yun be in the Demonic Voice Pavilion?" Fang Hu replied with a slightly bewildered tone.

Zu An frowned slightly. It seemed Fang Hu didn't know about the schemes that were going on. They were likely a plot conducted by Lu Sanyuan and a few higher-level figures. As such, he asked about some other questions to gain a deeper understanding of the Devil Sect.

He suddenly thought of something and said, "By the way, there were some mysterious people who came to talk in secret with your father for a while. Do you know who they were?"

Fang Hu nodded and said, "They seemed to be from the Shadow Group."

Zu An was startled. He hadn't expected even the Shadow Group to be involved too. He asked, "What did they talk about?"

"I don't know about the exact details, but they seem to want father to help find someone. But I don't know who exactly that person is," Fang Hu answered.

When he heard that, Zu An frowned slightly.

*Could it be that the Shadow Group is also looking for Yun Jianyue? Did the Yin Yang Path Master just not tell them the truth, or does he not know where Yun Jianyue is either?*

*But then, how am I supposed to continue my search now?*

At first, he'd deduced that the Yin Yang Path Master and Lu Sanyuan were conspiring against each other, but now, he wasn't so sure anymore.

He asked a few more questions, but didn't receive any further meaningful replies. As such, he just casually tapped the space between Fang Hu's brows, causing the other man's body to tremble. Fang Hu's expression slackened, and he fell to the ground.

Zhang Zitong exclaimed in shock, "You're going to just kill him?"

"Leaving scum like this alive would only bring further harm to the world," Zu An said coldly. With a wave of his hand, the White Lotus Flame swept out and burned Fang Hu's corpse away.

"Won't there be issues? He is still the Yin Yang Path's second young master!" Zhang Zitong said worriedly. She had learned a bit about the Devil Sect on the way here. The direct disciples of the Yin Yang Path were all the Yin Yang Path Master's own sons, so they had extraordinary statuses.

"It doesn't matter," Zu An said calmly.

Zhang Zitong wanted to say something, but after thinking about it, forget about a trifling second young master of the Yin Yang Path, even if it was the Yin Yang Path Master himself, Sir Eleven now led the entire Embroidered Envoy. Why would he need to feel scared?

...

Meanwhile, in another courtyard, a young man was cultivating in his room. His aquiline nose was especially striking.

Soon after, a subordinate entered to make a report. When the young man heard what his subordinate said, he slowly opened his eyes and remarked, "Second bro went to bully third bro again? Hmph, I want to see just how beautiful this silver token envoy is for myself, for second bro to be so impatient!"

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Chapter 2005: Substitution

Meanwhile, Zu An was talking to Zhang Zitong. He suddenly sensed something and made a shushing motion toward her.

Soon after, someone spoke up outside. "Second bro, did you come to bully third bro again?"

The moment those words were spoken, a young man appeared by the door. His looks were decent, and everything he did exuded a feeling of confidence. Compared to Fang Hu and Fang Biao, he did seem more impressive.

However, his aquiline nose paired with his malicious expression clearly told a different story, betraying his unkind nature.

At first, he seemed to have come to watch something fun, but when he saw what was going on inside, he was stunned. He asked, "Where is second brother?"

Zhang Zitong's heart began beating madly. Judging from his tone, it seemed this was the Yin Yang Path's oldest son, Fang Long.

Zu An had just burned away Fang Hu's corpse. Why had this guy suddenly come knocking on his door?

*Do these brothers have some kind of device that lets each other know if something happened to one of them?*

Zhang Zitong was really alarmed, but Zu An seemed completely unfazed as he replied, "He suddenly remembered something just now and hurriedly left. He seemed to be in a bit of a rush too."

*This is the toad who wants to marry Qiu Honglei?*

He secretly glanced at the people outside. It wouldn't be too difficult for him to deal with all of them. Even so, he still gave up on the thought in the end. He had to use the wedding to draw out all the rebels in one go.

*This guy's life is better off being spared for now.*

"He left?" Fang Long asked; he couldn't help but frown.

*What kind of important business could that kid Fang Hu have?*

He had no idea that he had almost lost his life right then and there.

Even so, he didn't pay the answer much heed, because everyone had some small secrets. He knew about Fang Hu's smuggling of Yin Yang Path drugs to outsiders, and figured his brother had most likely gone to sell drugs to his pack of scoundrels.

His gaze then landed on Zhang Zitong. A hint of surprise appeared in his eyes.

*That Embroidered Envoy was this pretty? More importantly, her legs are so long and straight! Just what kind of blasted luck did third bro experience?*

*Is there something wrong with second bro's head? He didn't want such a hot chick and decided to occupy himself with that stupid business?*

When she saw the desire in his eyes, Zhang Zitong's expression changed. For the first time, she was getting a bit annoyed at her own beauty and her long legs, which she had previously been immensely proud of. Why were they bringing her so much trouble?

A hint of coldness flickered across Zu An's eyes. As expected, the Yin Yang Path really was hiding endless corruption. Even brothers willfully stole women from each other, and all that mattered was who was stronger.

Fang Long took a deep breath and slightly eased his raging emotions before saying, "Third bro, this woman is a silver token envoy who definitely has many secrets. You should take good care of her and not let anything happen to even a single hair on her head. Once I've finished dealing with things in the next few days, I'll come to interrogate her personally."

His reason still won out in the end. He was going to marry the saintess soon, and was the target of countless disciples' jealousy. If he caused trouble now and ended up being denounced in public, that could just add more variables to the marriage. It was still best to wait until after he married the saintess. Then, he would play with this silver token envoy. Either way, there was no way this trash third bro would ever disobey him.

When he thought about Qiu Honglei's usual aloof and proud appearance, he started to get a bit worked up again. In order to leave the saintess with a good impression on the night of their marriage, he had already given up on his lust for half a month. He'd been drinking oyster and bull penis soup day after day, so it was as if there were a lump of fire building up in his abdomen, and yet he couldn't let it out ahead of time.

When he thought of that, he didn't dare to stay here for a moment longer, because he was worried that he wouldn't be able to hold it in if he continued to stare at those long legs.

When she saw him leave in a hurry, Zhang Zitong moved over to Zu An's side, saying, "This Yin Yang Path really is full of despicable scum!"

Zu An said indifferently, "Don't worry; they don't have many good days left to live."

Zhang Zitong was surprised. She said, "Master's relationship with that Devil Sect saintess seems to be quite special."

"Don't ask about things you shouldn't ask about," Zu An said, then turned around and left impatiently.

Zhang Zitong excitedly followed behind him and pleaded, "Come on, master, tell me about it! I promise I won't tell anyone."

"Remember your identity; obeying orders is your duty. The more secrets you know, the more dangerous it will be for you," Zu An replied.

"I'm just your female slave now though; I'm not even an Embroidered Envoy anymore," Zhang Zitong said.

Zu An was speechless.

"It's okay if master doesn't tell me, but can you let me see what you look like?"

"Do you want to die?"

"If I could see what you really look like, I'd be willing even if I have to die right now."

"Did you get drugged by an aphrodisiac again?"

"You're so annoying! I'm really curious here..."

...

In the end, Zu An ended up being pestered to the point that he just struck her acupoint to make her sleep. Only then did it quiet down a bit. He sat down on the bed and began to meditate. At the same time, he continued to control the living creatures around the Lake of Hatred to find out Yun Jianyue's whereabouts. Unfortunately, this was the Devil Sect General Headquarters, and it simply had too many defensive formations and restrictions. There were many areas that the smaller creatures couldn't enter, so he could only note those places down for now.

...

A night passed without any more talking. The next morning, Zhang Zitong woke up. When she looked at her intact clothing, she was in a bit of a daze.

"It's good that you're awake now. I'm going out for a bit, so be careful on your own," Zu An said before leaving the room.

Zhang Zitong touched her cheeks. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking, but there was a grin on her face as she muttered, "Who would have thought that the honorable Embroidered Envoy's Chief Commander would be a true gentleman who wouldn't be swayed at all?"

..

Meanwhile, when Zu An left the room and arrived at the Heavenly Devil School, he prepared to meet with Pan Qiaoqiao.

The Yin Yang Path and Heavenly Devil School were usually on good terms, and since Fang Biao was, for better or for worse, the Yin Yang Path's third young master, a female disciple of the Heavenly Devil School soon brought him in.

Pan Qiaoqiao waved for the others to leave first. Then, she looked at Zu An and asked with a frown, "Why did you come looking for me at a time like this? Be careful not to expose our plan." She had already recovered her usual charming yet prideful appearance; it was nothing like the lowly appearance she'd displayed in front of her master the previous day.

Zu An said, "I have a way to let you replace the saintess as the new bride ahead of time, letting you experience the feeling of Fang Long escorting the bride to the wedding ceremony."

"You're becoming braver and braver, aren't you? You don't even call him big brother anymore. Aren't you scared that I'll tell on you?" Pan Qiaoqiao asked with a lovely laugh.

Zu An smiled and said, "We're all among our own people here. In the future, I'll need sister-in-law to take good care of me, so why would you expose me?"

"That little mouth of yours has honey slathered all over it," Pan Qiaoqiao said, rocking back and forth in laughter. "But I don't believe you have the ability to switch me with the saintess. According to what I know, she's currently..." She stopped midway through her sentence and changed the topic. "Either way, it's

impossible. We should just patiently wait to perform the switch in the bridal room.”

“The two servants who are watching over her have some connection with me,” Zu An said quietly. “So that's why I have a way of switching the two of you ahead of time.”

Pan Qiaoqiao was stunned and couldn't help but give him a second look, saying, “Everyone says the Yin Yang Path's men are playboys. I didn't expect you to be more formidable than I thought.”

“Do you want to give the feeling of being a proper bride a shot?” Zu An asked, continuing to tempt her.

“Still, even if you have a connection to those two servants, it still doesn't seem possible, right?” Pan Qiaoqiao asked skeptically. After all, this was an extremely important affair. Why would two maids be willing to do tha?

“Don't worry, I have a way, but I can't tell you the exact details. It touches upon some of my own secrets,” Zu An said with a hushed voice.

Pan Qiaoqiao was a bit moved.

*Could there really be some other people I don't know about that have gotten involved too?*

*Alright, this is a good chance to look into it. If I can get any useful information, master will definitely reward me properly.*

It was impossible to tell what she was thinking, but a flush of redness appeared on Pan Qiaoqiao's cheeks. She said, “We can give it a try. Should we have Li Feiqing come with us?”

“Of course not,” Zu An said. When he saw her raise her brows, he continued, “Big sister Pan must be wondering why I'm taking such a risk to do this kind of thing, right?”

Pan Qiaoqiao couldn't help but laugh, saying, I am indeed a bit curious.” Indeed, the subject had drawn her curiosity for a while. Such a thing didn't seem to match Fang Biao's personality.

“It's because I want the saintess!” Zu An exclaimed, sounding excited.

Pan Qiaoqiao burst into laughter and immediately explained, "It's not that I'm deliberately making fun of you, it's just that this really is a bit... funny."

Zu An was speechless.

*This Fang Biao really is pretty unfortunate... He might be the respected third young master of the Yin Yang Path in the eyes of ordinary disciples, but in the eyes of others, just what do they see him as?*

Pan Qiaoqiao endured her laughter with a lot of difficulty, then continued, "Are you trying to steal Fang Long's beloved woman because of how he normally bullies you?" She had heard a bit about the Yin Yang Path's affairs.

Zu An figured that explanation would actually save him a bit of trouble and said, "That's right. He ran all the way over to my place to demand my silver token envoy. He went too far!"

A strange look flickered across Pan Qiaoqiao's eyes.

*That woman is indeed pretty; no wonder she became the final straw that broke the camel's back.*

"Even so, if this matter is exposed, your big bro will kill you," she said.

"That's why I'll need sister-in-law to help me put in a good word. Of course, I hope he'll never find out that the saintess is with me," Zu An said with an apologetic smile.

"I guess it's fine; I'll help you out later," Pan Qiaoqiao said. Despite that, she actually sneered inwardly.

*Does this idiot really think I'll help him?*

...

Then, Zu An took Pan Qiaoqiao to the courtyard Qiu Honglei was being held in. When she saw the layers of guards all around, Pan Qiaoqiao smiled ambiguously and asked, "Just what kind of method do you have to swap the two of us in this situation?"

Zu An chuckled and immediately summoned Daji.



Pan Qiaoqiao narrowed her eyes. How could there be a woman this beautiful? She'd thought that Qiu Honglei was already her greatest rival, but why had another one appeared?

She saw the white-clad woman walk into the courtyard; then, Zu An said, "Alright, follow me in."

Pan Qiaoqiao reflexively followed. When she entered, she noticed that the guards seemed to have not even seen her, and didn't even react. She couldn't help but ask, "Who is that woman? Why do you know such an exceptional person?"

Zu An replied, "I'll tell you later."

Pan Qiaoqiao was in a bit of a daze and unwittingly followed him inside. The first thing she saw was a sweet and graceful figure. She had viewed Qiu Honglei as her competitor for so many years, so she was able to recognize her immediately. Qiu Honglei was dressed in red bridal clothes, their color serving as a great contrast to her beautiful skin. She really was beautiful.

In that instant, Pan Qiaoqiao couldn't help but feel ashamed of her own inferiority. She'd wanted to compete against this woman all her life, and yet now, she felt that the very idea was a complete joke.

Qiu Honglei turned around and smiled at Zu An, saying, "You came! How do I look today?"

Zu An was briefly dazed, replying, "You're as beautiful as a heavenly immortal!"

Pan Qiaoqiao finally realized that something wasn't right and reflexively rushed out, crying, "Guards!"

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Chapter 2006: Bride

When she was talking to Fang Biao, Qiu Honglei's tone was like that of a lover flirting with her sweetheart. But how could that be possible?

Pan Qiaoqiao knew better than anyone what kind of crappy personality Fang Biao had. This was trash that even she looked down on, and Qiu Honglei wasn't blind. Why would she possibly like him? Her first reaction was that Qiu Honglei's mind had been affected by this brat's drugs, but she quickly gave up on that thought. Forget about the fact that such a crazy drug didn't exist, even if it did, with her cultivation, would Qiu Honglei even let Fang Biao approach her?

Countless thoughts had flooded her mind, but in reality, only an instant passed. Pan Qiaoqiao felt that the situation inside the room was extremely strange and instinctively felt a chill run through her entire body. That was why she ran out without an ounce of hesitation.

However, she soon discovered that her voice seemed to bounce right back off an invisible wall, and couldn't reach the outside at all. She was horrified. She was able to clearly sense that an extraordinary expert had set up a powerful barrier around this room. They definitely weren't someone she could hope to win against.

When she realized all of that, Pan Qiaoqiao activated a blood-igniting secret skill that unleashed her potential. Her usual cultivation immediately became twice as strong, and hidden weapons fired out like flower petals that filled the air. She didn't even know where her enemy was, and only hoped to be able to buy herself a bit more time.

However, her eyes quickly narrowed. She saw that Fang Biao casually waved his hand, and his sleeves seemed almost as if they contained a world of their own. All of the hidden weapons were sucked in.

*What?*

She had never expected that extraordinary expert to be Fang Biao!

*How is it possible for him to be this strong?*

*No, something's wrong! There's no way this person is Fang Biao!*

That thought appeared in her mind instantly. Then, everything in front of her eyes darkened. She didn't even see what had happened to make her faint.

When she saw Pan Qiaoqiao fall heavily to the floor, Qiu Honglei rolled her eyes at her lover, remarking, "Can't you be a bit more delicate with women?"

Even though that was what she said, the grin on her face gave away how happy she was to see this woman meet such an end.

"This woman didn't have good intentions anyway, so she deserved it," Zu An said with a chuckle. He shoved Pan Qiaoqiao under the bed so that he didn't have to look at her annoying face anymore.

Qiu Honglei wasn't interested in Pan Qiaoqiao either; instead, she raised her dress to do a spin in place. Her red dress looked like a fresh blossoming flower as she asked, "Ah Zu, do I look pretty?"

"A smile at a glance, a hundred charms unfold; the powdered maids of the six palaces pale compared to thee," Zu An said with sincere admiration.

"You're always so good at making me happy. There's clearly a few pretty women in the Imperial Palace too, like the empress. Even the crown princess is an exceptional beauty," Qiu Honglei said. She'd been a part of the attack on the Imperial Palace, and had a deep impression of them. Even so, that was all it was. When she heard the praise of her lover, she still felt incredibly sweet.

Zu An held her hand and helped her sort out her wedding clothes, asking, "Why are you wearing this today?"

"Did you not know that the bride has to try on the clothes ahead of time?" Qiu Honglei replied as she sat down in front of the mirror again to comb her hair. "Early this morning, the Yin Yang Path's people brought over the clothes for me to try. Even though their actions are despicable, I have to admit that they have an appreciation for beauty, and their clothes are quite beautiful. There were even some maids who came to help me with my appearance, but I chased all of them away."

"I just feel a bit strange to see you wear someone else's wedding clothes," Zu An said as he took the comb from her hands and helped her gently comb her hair.

"What do you mean, someone else? This is clearly mine." Qiu Honglei harrumphed. She added, "I actually wore this for you to see."

"It is really beautiful," Zu An commented. As he watched the woman in the mirror apply her red lip rouge, adding an enchanting gloss to her lips, he couldn't help but become a bit absent-minded.

People always said that a woman's most beautiful moment was when she became a bride. Qiu Honglei had always been extremely beautiful to begin with; now, paired with the decorated lanterns and colored banners, as well as her rosy lips, she looked even more beautiful.

Zu An couldn't help but lower his head to kiss her. Qiu Honglei looked away and said, "Not with that ugly appearance."

Zu An only realized he'd forgotten something then, and returned to his usual appearance. The two of them kissed, and Qiu Honglei moaned. Her body even became a bit weaker.

It was different from before. Now, there was no one here to disturb them, so they didn't need to worry about anything anymore. This kiss unraveled their pent-up feelings for each other. After being apart for so long, all of their emotions were poured into the kiss.

They only separated after a long time. However, Qiu Honglei's eyes were teary as she said, "Ah Zu, sometimes, I feel really inferior."

"Inferior? Why would you think anything like that?" Zu An asked, confused. That was especially true after he arrived at the Lake of Hatred and found out just how highly the other disciples in the Devil Sect thought of her.

She was simply a goddess in the eyes of every man. She was the target of every direct disciple's admiration. To think there could be someone this beautiful who also paid equal attention to cultivation, and yet said that they felt inferior... If someone like Pan Qiaoqiao were to hear such a thing, perhaps she would have woken up out of anger on the spot.

"Because you and Chuyan are husband and wife, and even Manman is so close to you. I'm the only one who is like an outsider with you," Qiu Honglei replied; a tear couldn't help but slide down her face as she spoke.

When he saw her tear-stained face, Zu An felt a great sense of pity. He didn't say anything and just kissed her, comforting her with his gentleness.

Qiu Honglei was completely moved. She looked at him with her teary eyes and said, "Ah Zu, I've already pretty much fully cultivated the method my master taught me."

Zu An felt stirred, saying, "That means..."

Because of Yun Jianyue's warning, the two of them had never dared to take that final step. They couldn't ruin her body ahead of time, or else Qiu Honglei wouldn't be able to reach the highest level of Charming Voice.

Affection filled Qiu Honglei's eyes as she said, "Ah Zu, today, I am your bride..."

Zu An's breath quickened. How could he still hold himself back? He immediately picked her up and carried her to the dressing table. The gorgeous and precious wedding clothes slid down her shoulders, fully exposing her pure, jade-like body. Even the fresh flowers next to her seemed to pale in comparison.

Everything continued naturally...

Suddenly, Qiu Honglei bit down on Zu An's shoulder. Her entire body trembled continuously.

Zu An felt a bit sorry and asked, "It hurts, doesn't it?"

Qiu Honglei nodded, but then quickly shook her head. A hint of pained worry appeared on her beautiful face. If the other disciples of the sect saw her current expression, who knows just how many hearts would shatter on the spot?!

She took a deep breath and calmed down a bit. However, her charming little face was still pale as she said, "Your... I have no idea just how Chuyan was able to handle you." She'd felt as if her entire body was going to split open as soon as they joined.

When he saw how uncomfortable she was, how could Zu An still keep going at it?

And yet, to his surprise, Qiu Honglei wrapped herself around him like an octopus and said, "Don't stop."

"But..." Zu An began.

Qiu Honglei gently pressed her finger against his lips, asking, "Did you forget that I'm a Devil Sect witch? I'm the first one to have cultivated our charm skills to the highest level, you know? Even though master is formidable, she's never experienced love, so she probably can't compare to me."

Zu An had a strange expression. If she found out about his relationship with Yun Jianyue, he would definitely die a miserable death.

Qiu Honglei continued, "The charm skill of my sect not only makes men playthings in the palm of one's hand, but also teaches how to please the man one truly loves."

She began to circulate her cultivation. Even though Zu An couldn't see what she was doing, he could tell she was now clearly different from before. Every smile and frown now seemed to tug at his soul. What was even clearer was that her body became even softer than cotton.

Qiu Honglei moved closer to Zu An and whispered quietly by his ear, "I might not be able to win against Chuyan in a fight, but there's no way she can compare to me in this respect."

*This damn petty desire to win!*

How could Zu An still control himself? With a roar, he launched his powerful counterattack.

...

With a loud bang, in a place a hundred miles away, dozens of Devil Sect soldiers finally smashed through the tightly-shut entrance of a mountain stronghold, using a crude siege hammer made from a thousand-year-old tree trunk. Then, the attack troops behind them roared as they charged inside. Unfortunately, the stronghold's defenses were extremely tough, and the forces inside quickly fought back, pushing the Devil Sect's soldiers back out.

A young man with a cold and detached expression watched with an indifferent expression. Soon after, Devil Sect soldiers came up to him and reported, "Brother Ding, the New Moon Palace's retaliation is extremely fierce and our brothers have suffered heavy casualties. Should we stop the battle for now?"

"I don't want to hear about the number of casualties; I only want the New Moon Palace! I want everyone to know that all those who follow master will sing in triumph, while all those who go against master will perish!" the young man replied.

He was none other than Lu Sanyuan's direct disciple, Ding Xia, as well as the Unfeeling Path's publicly acknowledged most outstanding inheritor. People all

believed that he would be the one to lead the Unfeeling Path to a new age of glory.

The soldier gritted his teeth when he heard that. He turned around and passed down the orders. Now that they knew that there was no way out, the Devil Sect soldiers up ahead continued to charge with reddened eyes. They sent the siege hammer smashing forward again.

Even so, the New Moon Palace's people also knew that they would undoubtedly die once the enemy broke through, so they gritted their teeth and persevered.

Just like that, the siege hammer smashed inward before being forced out. The stronghold's gate flowed with a river of blood.

However, after a couple dozen more exchanges like that, the New Moon Palace finally caved. As the siege hammer rushed straight in, it signaled a one-sided slaughter.

The soldiers under Ding Xia's command became more and more excited. They all rushed in and stormed every single entrance. However, they weren't able to feel happy for long before miserable screams filled the air.

As it turned out, the New Moon Palace used liquid tactics. Endless viscous poison swarmed in from all directions, causing the enemy to suffer tremendous casualties. Then, the remaining forces of the New Moon Palace attacked from hidden areas, forcing the intruders into alley fights. Because of the poison, the entire place became muddy. Pressing forward became extremely difficult.

When he saw the power the New Moon Palace displayed, Ding Xia's face twitched. He decided to personally lead his guards onto the battlefield.

After several hours of bitter fighting, the New Moon Palace's defenses finally couldn't hold on any longer. They lost position after position until eventually, even the final core area that represented the New Moon Palace was also broken through.

Ding Xia finally smiled when he saw that. Within a radius of a thousand miles, the last faction loyal to Yun Jianyue had finally been taken down. He could now peacefully return to attend the wedding. He wanted to see if that Yun woman planned to continue hiding; was she going to just watch her precious

disciple marryomg Fang Long, or would she be unable to hold herself back and throw her life away?

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## Chapter 2007: Assassination

Meanwhile, over at the Devil Sect General Headquarters, Fang Long was in Fang Hu's residence. He frowned slightly after scanning the surroundings, muttering, "Second bro still isn't back?"

"We don't know where second young master went. Does big brother want to come in for a drink? He might come back if we wait just a while longer," a group of women said as they surrounded Fang Long enthusiastically.

That was how interactions in the Yin Yang Path went. Everyone within it just wanted to follow the strongest person.

Whether it was Fang Long's cultivation or appearance, they were both far above Fang Hu's. Thus, the women all wanted to climb the ladder.

As for their chastity... The Yin Yang Path didn't care about anything like that. If both sides were to each other's liking, all they cared about was making passionate love.

At any other time, Fang Long probably would have been tempted. There were quite a few women in second brother's courtyard that he was fond of. However, he was getting married to the saintess the next day. Furthermore, the silver token envoy he had just seen was far above these powdered women in the courtyard. He really didn't know just how he'd been able to stand sleeping with them before.

"I still have some affairs to take care of. Once second bro gets back, contact me immediately," he said, then turned around to leave.

He thought about giving the beauty with those wonderful legs at his third bro's place another look, but after thinking about it, he decided to go in another direction. It was better for him to visit the new bride and try to get closer to each other. He thought about how cold and indifferent Qiu Honglei normally was toward him.



*Look at you now! Don't you have no choice but to obediently marry me?*

*I'll teach you who's more formidable on our wedding night.*

All kinds of lovely scenes appeared in his mind. He was burning with desire, to the point that it even made his footsteps a bit faster.

Soon after, he arrived at the courtyard Qiu Honglei was locked up in. The guards recognized him and didn't stop him.

He walked toward the pretty loft. Suddenly, he sniffed the air and muttered, "Hm? Why is there a faint fragrance?"

As the Yin Yang Path's young master, he was very familiar with the smell of cosmetics. He quickly discerned that it wasn't a fragrance, but rather the smell of a woman's body. That kind of scent really penetrated deeply. Just a bit of leftover scent was enough for him to know that it was definitely an extremely beautiful woman. He had never smelled such a scent before in the Devil Sect. He became a bit puzzled.

*Could it be that there are still beauties in the Devil Sect that I don't know of?*

However, after thinking about it, he realized that since it was in this courtyard, it was most likely the saintess' smell. Perhaps she had changed fragrances recently. Qiu Honglei made sure to keep her distance from him and wouldn't let him within three feet of her, which was why he wasn't that familiar with her smell.

*Even so, I'll be able to smell every inch of her skin tomorrow.*

When he thought of those scenes, he felt his blood boiling all throughout his body.

...

When he arrived in front of the loft, Fang Long stopped. He sorted out his clothes.

*What an elegant and handsome man I am! I refuse to believe that the saintess never had any feelings for me!*

They were already getting married tomorrow, so he didn't want to be too hasty. He decided to leave Qiu Honglei with a good impression. As such, he

cleared his throat and said with the most gentle and charming voice he could muster, "Saintess, Fang Long wishes to see you."

A cry of alarm came from above, followed by the sounds of chairs and tables touching. Fang Long was stunned and quickly asked, "Saintess, is something wrong?"

"Don't come in!" Qiu Honglei immediately cried out from upstairs.

Fang Long didn't get angry; instead, he felt happy and said, "Okay, no problem. I won't come in."

The saintess normally didn't show a sliver of emotion toward him. However, she almost seemed to be pouting playfully, and her tone was much gentler than usual.

*It must be that since she's marrying me tomorrow, she's already started to change her opinion of me.*

...

Qiu Honglei didn't know what kind of thoughts were going through Fang Long's head. When she heard his voice, her soul almost left her body! Then, she couldn't help but tremble.

Zu An took a deep breath. He almost couldn't hold it in.

Qiu Honglei looked bashfully at Zu An.

*Why is he acting as if nothing happened? I was almost scared to death!*

Even though with their cultivation ranks, they didn't need to fear Fang Long, if he found out what was happening inside, she would really need to find a hole to hide inside forever.

Fortunately, she was a Devil Sect woman to begin with. After the initial alarm, she calmed down slightly. She pursed her lips and called out, "Why are you here?"

Fang Long bowed slightly and said, "My humble self came to ask if the saintess was satisfied with the wedding clothes. This was something I had sewn by master craftsmen after searching for hundreds of miles. I wonder if it suits your tastes."

"It's pretty... pretty goodm" Qiu Honglei said. She was actually completely red in the face, silently hitting her lover in the chest.

*This guy really is daring! He actually hasn't even let me go in this kind of situation!*

"That's good, that's good," Fang Long said. When he sensed the charming tone in Qiu Honglei's voice, he was a bit surprised as well. The saintess was usually strict in her conduct, and her status was revered; thus, his thoughts never even approached the truth. He just assumed her attitude was getting gentler because she was about to become a bride.

His insides heated up as he said, "Saintess, my humble self is coming up to take a look. If there are any parts that need to be adjusted, I can immediately inform the dressmaker." He pushed open the door to enter immediately after.

Qiu Honglei was horrified. She quickly opened a window and did her best to stick her head out, crying, "Do you not know the rules?! The bride and groom aren't allowed to meet before marriage!"

Fortunately, Ah Zu had insisted on her keeping her clothes on. As a Devil Sect witch, she naturally knew what kinds of things men thought about. Even so, she was passionately in love and had felt a bit moved. She'd only wanted to give all of herself to her lover, so of course she hadn't refused. She hadn't expected that it would actually be helpful to the current situation, because she was still 'dressed' and could meet another person.

Fang Long looked at her, and his jaw dropped.

*Just too beautiful!*

Qiu Honglei was already extremely beautiful normally, but right now, her cheeks were red and her eyes misty. There was an alluring gloss on her lips.

Fang Long couldn't help but sigh inwardly. The women he had met all his life were all just cake and powder. As long as the saintess became his wife, even if he had to get rid of all of his concubines and had to stay with her alone for the rest of his days, he would still feel that it was worth it.

"Saintess, you really are beautiful!" he exclaimed. He was a master of flirting to begin with, but at that instant, he felt like an ignorant young man who had seen a beauty for the first time. None of his womanizing words came out.

"You've already seen me, so go back already!" Qiu Honglei cried, and prepared to close the window.

"Wait!" Fang Long called out as he stared at her with a hint of confusion. "Did those maids not comb the saintess' hair? I need to properly discipline them."

The hair of the beauty above was a bit messy. Even though it gave her a kind of enchanting allure, it still clashed a bit with the grand ceremonial clothes she wore.

"It's nothing. I felt that they didn't do my hair that well and wanted to do it myself, but then you suddenly arrived," Qiu Honglei said; her fingers clamped down on the windowsill while her other hand gave her lover a fierce pinch.

*This guy is going to be the end of me!*

Fortunately, her window was only partly open, so the parts of her body that were exposed could hide the lower half.

Fang Long felt relieved and said, "Right, how could those maids' perception of beauty compare to the saintess' judgment?" When he saw that Qiu Honglei cared that much about her appearance, he couldn't help but be pleased.

*It seems she plans to show me her most beautiful side when she marries me tomorrow.*

However, he didn't know that Qiu Honglei was filled with coldness. If it weren't because she had to catch Lu Sanyuan and all the others in one go tomorrow at the wedding, why would she ever even talk to this man in such a way and go through with such a situation?

"Then I won't be disturbing the saintess anymore. See you tomorrow," Fang Long said; he wanted to leave her with the impression of a gentleman. He bowed elegantly before leaving.

He couldn't help but turn around repeatedly as he left. He saw that the saintess was still leaning against the window, her expression sweet and charming. Her body seemed to be swaying a bit, which he took as her being in a pretty good mood. When he thought about how such a beautiful woman was going to become his bride tomorrow, Fang Long only felt his heart being swayed too.

When Fang Long finally left, Qiu Honglei finally couldn't take it anymore. Her entire body became weak. She bit down on her sweetheart out of embarrassment.

...

The next day, the Lake of Hatred was decorated with lanterns and colored banners. The bride's escort quickly arrived at the side courtyard. Soon after, they escorted the marriage carriage to the Yin Yang Path's location.

Along the way, gongs and drums rang out jubilantly. Several disciples came out to watch along the way. Many Devil Sect men wept bitter tears, because the goddess of their hearts was now going to become a married woman. In contrast, many female disciples actually felt a bit happy at her misfortune. The pressure they had felt from Qiu Honglei really was suffocating, but now that she was to be married, there was one less major rival.

Suddenly, a figure rushed out from among the crowd like a bolt of lightning. A long and thin sword appeared, only leaving behind a cold glint as it stabbed straight into the marriage carriage. A woman's bitter cry filled the air.

Those present were shocked. They had never expected the saintess to experience an assassination!

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Chapter 2008: Vengeance

Welcoming the bride was naturally of utmost importance during the wedding. Fang Long had made sure to send Yin Yang Path experts as escorts along the way, and there were also Heavenly Devil School and Unfeeling Path bodyguards. All of their preparations had been made out of fear that the disciples would do something extreme. After all, Qiu Honglei's prestige in the sect was too high, and she was now getting married. It would definitely be difficult for some disciples to accept that reality.

But no matter how worked up those disciples were, no one had imagined that someone would actually try to directly assassinate the saintess! When the assassin suddenly rushed out from the crowd, they'd all thought that it was a

crazy admirer of the saintess. They'd planned to teach that person a lesson, then let them go.

However, that person had just moved too quickly. Before the guards could intercept them, they had already rushed through a gap.

One Yin Yang Path guard had eventually reacted to what was happening, drawing his weapon to face the assassin. Unfortunately, the assassin's sword was too fast, so fast that the guard was only midway through drawing his weapon before a sword thrust through his forehead and ended his life. Another guard swiftly met the same fate.

The assassin's sword hadn't stopped at all, continuing straight into the marriage carriage; after that, a woman's scream tore through the air. However, the assassin didn't stop there. With a tap of their toes, they turned into a streak of flowing light before vanishing into the distance.

The entire process happened in a mere few blinks of an eye, or perhaps a few breaths. A second prior, all of the disciples had still been heartbroken over the saintess now becoming a married woman, but how could they have expected that the saintess would be assassinated inside her marriage carriage?!

### *The Shadow Group!*

The same words appeared in all their minds.

Only the Shadow Group's top assassins could achieve such a result and immediately flee the scene.

Normally, with the saintess' cultivation, there was no way she would die even if a top Shadow Group assassin came after her. However, today was her day of celebration, and there were guards all around. She no doubt had to be much more relaxed than usual. On top of that, the marriage carriage itself blocked her line of sight, so she likely had no way to react in time. That was the conclusion reached by many people who had been watching the whole procession with the cool gaze of a bystander.

However, even more people began bawling their hearts out. The saintess was not only the goddess of countless male disciples' admiration; she was a symbol of the sect, and yet she'd actually died here!

Many people rushed over in a panic to see what was going on, but the guards still had their duties to shoulder, so how could they let the crowd approach? They instinctively stopped those people, which quickly incurred public anger. Many people cursed, and some even began to fight back.

Just as the situation looked as if it could develop into an all-out brawl, a gentle voice suddenly said, "Stop!"

The people's bodies trembled, because they were all too familiar with that voice. They all turned around. An incredibly charming woman slowly walked over from a distance. Who else could it be but the saintess?

Many people were stunned. If the saintess was here, who was the woman who had died in the marriage carriage?

Qiu Honglei said with a sentimental tone, "Junior sister Pan expected that someone would cause trouble during this marriage, so she offered to draw their attention by entering the marriage carriage in my place. At first, I didn't agree to it, but things really did turn out the way she thought. Unfortunately, for the sake of saving me, her decision only ended up taking her life."

She had been secretly following from behind the whole time. She hadn't expected such a variable to appear at all. She'd wanted Pan Qiaoqiao to attend the wedding so that Lu Sanyuan and the others would all gather in one place, but Pan Qiaoqiao had actually ended up dying here! Helpless to do anything else, she could only choose to show herself and once again take her place as the bride. Saving her master was the most important thing, after all. As for everything else, she believed that Ah Zu would understand. Either way, it wasn't a real marriage.

The guards opened up the carriage curtains. Sure enough, the Heavenly Devil School's Pan Qiaoqiao was sitting inside.

The Devil Sect's people were all stunned.

*Didn't Pan Qiaoqiao and the saintess not get along? Why were they acting like sisters, with the former even giving up her life for the latter? Could it be that they were only doing all of that in the past to deceive everyone else?*

*Even so, that performance is just too good, right?*

But even though the matter was strange, no one thought any more of it. They were still happier with this result, because the saintess was safe and sound. As for Pan Qiaoqiao, even though she had some pursuers, it was night and day compared to Qiu Honglei.

Only the guards who were in charge of the escort were a bit stunned, because they had always thought that they were guarding Qiu Honglei. They didn't even know when Qiu Honglei had left the carriage! They figured that it had to have been that wench Pan Qiaoqiao who colluded with others to accomplish such a thing.

Even so, if the saintess had really been killed, they'd all have been out of luck, so this result actually seemed quite good.

They quickly brought out Pan Qiaoqiao's corpse and found another marriage carriage for Qiu Honglei to get into. After all, the top priority was safely delivering the saintess to the wedding. As for everything else, they would make a careful report to their superiors after.

...

Meanwhile, the assassin's figure moved like lightning, darting between the buildings. Along the way, he randomly tossed his hat, mask, outfit, and other such things into secluded corners. Soon after, he became no different from an ordinary Devil Sect disciple. A grin appeared on his lips; he was clearly satisfied with his work this time.

Suddenly, he trembled. He looked up and saw a man standing not far away.

Zu An sized him up, remarking, "This brother's sword was really quite fast."

The assassin seemed to have decent looks. His face was abnormally pale, as if he never saw the sun, but he wasn't a dark elf, and was actually purely human.

After what just happened, Zu An had rushed over after hearing the news. No matter how fast the assassin was, how could he be faster than Zu An?

At first, he'd planned to secretly follow him and see if he could find some clues regarding the Shadow Group. After all, the group was too mysterious. Even the Embroidered Envoy only knew a trifling bit about them. However, who would have thought that after so long, the assassin hadn't gone to any secret



Shadow Group rendezvous point, and changed his outfit to become an ordinary Devil Sect disciple instead? Zu An didn't have that much time to waste on him, so he'd decided to just show himself.

"How long have you been following me?" the assassin asked, although the question was a feint to confuse his opponent.

As soon as he said that, he suddenly shot out like lightning and instantly appeared in front of Zu An. A long and thin sword appeared, aimed at the space between Zu An's brows. The Yin Yang Path's two veteran experts had been instantly killed by this move. They hadn't even had time to draw their weapons.

However, the assassin's eyes soon widened, because his sword that had always been successful in every endeavor actually stopped. It was clamped between two very ordinary fingers as if it were nothing. At any other time, who would dare to try to overestimate his sword and try to stop it this way? The sword he possessed would surely have cut through those two fingers, then penetrated the opponent's skull. But regardless of how much strength he exerted, his sword didn't budge even an inch.

He was horrified. He decisively abandoned his sword and rushed back in retreat. As an assassin, he had never had thoughts such as 'my sword and I are inseparable', and had always turned his nose up disdainfully at the idea of dying with the sword. As an assassin, the most important thing was preserving his own life. Only then would he have a chance of completing the mission. Even though the sword was important, compared to one's life, what did it matter?

Perhaps because of the terrifying pressure he felt from the opponent, he felt that he was moving faster than ever before, even more so than when he'd assassinated the saintess. Even so, he still didn't relax in the slightest. At the same time, he scattered a handful of poisonous powder behind him, and he activated all kinds of magic weapons he had accumulated over the years. As long as he was given a moment to catch his breath, he would be able to disappear into the alley up ahead. Then, he would just change his appearance and blend into the crowd. The opponent wouldn't be able to catch him again.

However, his body suddenly froze. Fear appeared in his eyes for the first time; his acupoints had just been struck.

*Just what kind of monster is this? Why is his cultivation so ridiculously high?*

Zu An retracted his finger and arrived in front of the assassin, saying, "I just have some questions to ask; there's no need for you to run so quickly."

The strength this assassin displayed wasn't inferior to that of the representative disciples in Violet Mountain's great daoist competition. Judging from his age, he seemed even younger than many of those representative disciples, and yet he was on par with them. The Shadow Group really was full of mysteries.

When he saw the horror in the young man's eyes, Zu An chuckled and casually sat down on a rock to the side, asking, "What is your name?"

The young man kept his mouth shut. He clearly didn't wish to speak.

"If you can't even answer something like that, maybe I should just send you to the Yin Yang Path. Those fellas over there don't only like women; they're also quite interested in pretty boys like you," Zu An said with a sneer.

"You...!" The young man's expression changed. He didn't fear torture, but that kind of thing made him shiver just thinking about it. "Your respected self's cultivation is so high, so why would you do such a thing that would shame your status?"

**You have successfully trolled Jing Li for +110 +110 +110...**

"So it was Jing Li," Zu An remarked with a chuckle, as his plan had been to anger the assassin in the first place. "Who says you have to act a certain way just because your cultivation is high?"

The young man was shocked, exclaiming, "How do you know my name?"

"I have my ways," Zu An said calmly. "Can you tell me what your role is in the Shadow Group? With your cultivation, I'm sure you're not just some petty foot soldier."

The young man's expression changed several times, but in the end, he still kept his mouth tightly shut.

Zu An frowned slightly, saying, "There is a limit to my patience. I have other ways of finding out everything about you, but that would require me to cripple your cultivation. I believe you don't wish for that to happen." Then, he activated his Heaven Devouring Sutra and aimed it at Jing Li.

When Jing Li sensed the terrifying pressure, his expression changed. He clearly knew that Zu An wasn't lying. He took a deep breath and said, "I am not from the Shadow Group."

"You're still trying to lie in this kind of situation?" Zu An harrumphed. "Anyone could tell that you're from the Shadow Group."

"That's exactly what I wanted them to think," Jing Li replied.

Zu An was shocked. He now had some suspicions himself, saying, "Continue."

Jing Li looked at him with a complicated expression, asking, "If I speak, will you let me go?"

"An assassin like you shouldn't be asking such a childish question," Zu An said with a chuckle.

Jing Li sighed, saying, "I definitely wouldn't ask something like this if it were anyone else, but your respected self's cultivation is the highest out of anyone I have seen. I believe you're definitely not someone who would go back on your word."

"Don't try to give me such a high-sounding label. Let's hear what you have to say first," Zu An replied.

Jing Li sighed in relief when he saw that Zu An didn't promise him anything, saying, "That's because I have a deep grudge against the Shadow Group. I want revenge against them!"

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Chapter 2009: Shadow Group Master

"Oh?" Zu An exclaimed; now it was his turn to be surprised. He gave up on any thoughts of crippling Jing Li and asked, "What kind of grudge do you have with the Shadow Group?"

Jing Li took a deep breath. Hatred flickered in his eyes as he said, "My father used to be the sect master of the Skysplitting School, and the Shadow Group

Master was a junior brother of my father. In the past, he was frequently bullied by members of the sect, and my father always helped him. But in the end, he used my father and stole many secret manuals from our sect. Then, he formed his own organization, establishing the Shadow Group.

“My father was forced to reflect on his actions for ten years as punishment. When the late school master perished and passed on the position of school master to my father, he instructed my father to clean up the mess in our Skysplitting School. Only then did my father find out that the Skysplitting School had failed in its many attempts to eliminate the Shadow Group, and the losses were severe. The hearts of the school's disciples wavered, and many people were actually roped in by the Shadow Group. As time went on, the Skysplitting School became weaker and weaker, while the Shadow Group grew stronger and stronger.

“In order to prevent the two factions from suffering, my father decided to hold a duel to decide the future prospects of both sides. However, after that duel, he never returned, and the Skysplitting School thus fully crumbled.”

He was actually making a gamble here too. Since this person was investigating the Shadow Group, he clearly wasn't someone from there. An enemy of an enemy could be a friend. Of course, if it were anyone else, there was no way he would lay everything out on the table like this, but the cultivation of the person in front of him was just too high, to the point that he couldn't even have any thoughts of fighting back.

Zu An was a bit surprised when he heard the explanation; he'd never expected such a story. He asked, “He lost a fair battle, so you can't blame the Shadow Group Master for that, right?”

“But that battle wasn't fair!” Jing Li exclaimed, clearly enraged. “My father was known to be number one in the Skysplitting School, while the Shadow Group Master was a known loser. All of his skills were even personally taught to him by my father. How could someone like that possibly win against my father? On top of that, with my father's current cultivation, even if he lost, what were the odds that he couldn't even preserve his life? The other side definitely used some despicable and underhanded means during that fight!

“At the time, the Shadow Group's rise might have been sudden, but the Skysplitting School had a richer history. It was hard to say who would come out on top. And yet, because of my father's unexpected death, the Skysplitting School experienced such a crushing collapse.”

Zu An asked seriously, “Did you witness that fight?”

Jing Li shook his head in despair, saying, “For the sake of fairness, both sides decided not to bring any subordinates. Now, it seems that my father honored the promise, but the other side might not have.”

Zu An wasn't too worried about their internal dispute; instead, he asked, “What's the name of the Shadow Group Master?” He had never been able to find that out even through all of the court's investigations. Since this person was the junior brother of Jing Li's father, he definitely knew.

“Si Chao!” Jing Li replied, his eyes full of a deeply entrenched hatred.

“Si Chao?” Zu An repeated with a frown.

He didn't have any impression of the name. There were so many famous cultivators in the world, but he didn't seem to have heard it before. However, after thinking about it, if this was the king of assassins, there was no way the Shadow Group Master would use his real name when interacting with others. It made sense for the name to be unrecognizable. He'd finally obtained some clues, but had the trail already run cold?

He suddenly thought about the puzzles from the detective shows he'd watched and thought of something. He asked, “What does the Shadow Group master look like? Tell me in more detail.” While speaking, he took out a sheet of paper and a brush. For the sake of learning the appearance-changing skill, he had received the personal guidance of Yu Yanluo. His artistic skills were already at an extremely high level.

Jing Li was stunned. Even though he was a bit suspicious, he still described the Shadow Group Master's appearance to Zu An.

Zu An's brush moved grandly according to Jing Li's descriptions. Soon after, a face appeared vividly on the paper. The face was really ordinary, of the sort no one would give a second look to. He was someone naturally suited to assassination.

Jing Li was a bit hesitant, saying, “I don't know if it's correct or not. I was still young back then, and Si Chao was usually antisocial and rarely showed himself. After so many years have passed, I fear that I might have remembered incorrectly.”

However, Zu An stared straight at the drawing, because he found the person a bit familiar. He was almost certain that he had seen the person before, but as for exactly where, he just couldn't think of it. Still, with his current cultivation, there should have been no reason for him to have forgotten if he had seen them before. Why couldn't he recognize the person, whom he didn't know, but somehow found a bit familiar?

"Is senior from the Freedom Path?" Jing Li asked probingly. Only those from the Freedom Path were most adept at drawing in the Devil Sect.

However, he quickly discarded that thought. When had the Freedom Path ever had such a powerful individual? If he really was from the Freedom Path, the Devil Sect would have long since been under their rule. Judging from the strength the other person showed, he was even stronger than his father had been in the past. No, there wasn't anyone in all of the Devil Sect's three schools and six paths who could compare to this man.

Zu An didn't reply and put the picture away, asking seriously, "So is that why you deliberately pretended to be a Shadow Group assassin, so you could trigger conflict between the Devil Sect and the Shadow Group?"

"That's right," Jing Li said with a sad smile. "Even though I worked hard over the years and gained many opportunities, I know there's still a huge difference in strength between the Shadow Group Master and myself. Let alone the fact that he has so many powerful cultivators under him, and any of them would easily defeat me. That's why I could only carry out this kind of plan."

"The plan wasn't too bad," Zu An said with a hint of praise. He then continued, "Since you've been around the Devil Sect General Headquarters, do you know where Sect Master Yun Jianyue is?"

"Sect Master Yun?" Jing Li repeated in confusion. Then, he shook his head and said, "Her respected self rarely shows herself, so of course I wouldn't be able to meet her. On top of that, because I tried to go against the Shadow Group several times, they have people investigating me too. I normally stay hidden in my room and rarely leave."

Zu An thought of something. He'd heard Fang Biao and Fang Hu mention that some mysterious black-clad individuals had sought out the Yin Yang Path Master for a discussion, and they seemed to be from the Shadow Group. At first, he'd thought that they had come for Yun Jianyue and Qiu Honglei, but now, it seemed they'd come to target this brat.

As such, he warned Jing Li, "Be careful of the Yin Yang Path's people." He disappeared right afterward.

Leaving a quick-witted youngster who was trying to cause trouble for the Shadow Group alive could just prove useful in the future.

Jing Li was stunned. He noticed that his acupoints had already been released. He'd never expected to be let go so easily. On top of that, even though it happened right before his eyes, he couldn't even tell how the other person had left.

"What a mysterious and powerful person!" he muttered to himself.

When he thought of that, he couldn't help but feel shaken. He suddenly became more confident than ever before. With such a mysterious and unfathomable enemy against them, he wasn't fighting against the Shadow Group alone anymore.

There seemed to be someone approaching from the distance, so he pulled down his hat and quickly vanished into the shadows.

...

Meanwhile, in the Yin Yang Path's main hall, decorated lanterns and colored banners were everywhere. The Devil Sect's three schools and six paths' important figures were all present. Additionally, as the hosts, the Yin Yang Path Master and the groom Fang Long were standing at the entrance to welcome all the guests.

However, Zhang Zitong was hiding in the shadows and observing the Yin Yang Path Master. He was tall and slender, with heavy bags and glaring dark circles under his eyes. This was clearly a sign of overexertion in his relationships.

As for Fang Long, he was dressed in a festive robe and had an uncontrollable smile. He seemed especially energetic today.

"Look at him putting on airs!" Zhang Zitong cursed. At the same time, she was a bit worried as to why she still didn't see any sign of Sir Eleven anywhere. The task Sir Eleven had assigned her seemed a bit ridiculous. Were things really going to develop as he predicted?

One after another, more important figures arrived. Zhang Zitong matched their faces up to the information the Embroidered Envoy had one by one.

The one dressed in the yellow clothes embroidered with coins, who was as round as a ball, was likely the World School Master Chen Taogong. As expected of a business tycoon, he looked the most like a rich bastard out of anyone present. Meanwhile, the handsome middle-aged man dressed in a gown adorned with simple and elegant bamboo leaves was likely the Freedom Path Master Hua Feihua. The green jade flute hanging from his waist was undoubtedly his famous weapon, the 'Butterfly Loving Flower'.

*Hmph, a grown man like him could've used any weapon, and yet he insists on using a flute.*

The one in a daoist robe with a horsetail whisk was likely the Secret Path's Chi Fuzi. There were also a few elders present, who were also people Zhang Zitong recognized from the court's name lists.

Zhang Zitong started to feel really overwhelmed the longer she watched. It was a pity that she wasn't strong enough, or else she could have caught all of these people in one go and earned tremendous contributions for herself. However, she quickly realized that she was no longer an Embroidered Envoy. She couldn't help but feel a bit dejected.

More and more people from all over the Devil Sect came. Even though they normally argued with each other, today, they all greeted the Yin Yang Path Master with smiles and congratulations.

As for the young disciples, they all looked at Fang Long with enmity.

"That guy really has some damned good luck."

"He's about to marry the saintess, so of course he's in good spirits."

"The saintess has always kept her distance from him, so why did she actually agree to a marriage with him?"

"I heard the Yin Yang Path agreed to support the Heavenly Devil School on one condition, which was to wed their direct disciples. That should be why."

"Just how long ago were those agreements made? Who would even honor such words now..."



“Even so, this is how things are. The saintess will still marry him, right?”

...

As he sensed the jealous expressions of everyone around him, Fang Long felt incredibly pleased with himself.

*Keep feeling jealous; your goddess is going to become my woman! I'll definitely dote on her in place of all of you, hahaha!*

Suddenly, news of the assassination attempt on the saintess came back. The Yin Yang Path Master's expression changed, but when he heard that Qiu Honglei was fine, he decided not to make a big deal of it. For now, they would marry Qiu Honglei off first. At least then things couldn't be changed either way. He quickly transferred some elder experts to receive the guests.

“The Vice Sect Master has arrived!” a voice called out.

Suddenly, the noisy hall immediately became quiet. All those present got up and greeted the new arrival with solemn expressions.

Zhang Zitong, who had blended into the crowd, quickly turned around. She saw a middle-aged man slowly walk in from outside. His face was handsome, and his bearing was outstanding. His hair wasn't combed and naturally fell behind him. Rather than looking like a great demon, he looked more like a hermit who stood aloof from worldly affairs.

As if sensing her gaze, Lu Sanyuan looked in her direction.

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Chapter 2010: Cross-Dressing Only Feels Good for a Moment

Zhang Zitong was startled and quickly retracted her gaze.

*That demon's cultivation is really scary... I only gave him a few more glances, and yet he already sensed it.*

She understood her limits well. If she was discovered by this great demon, with her cultivation, there was no chance of her winning.

Fortunately, the Yin Yang Path Master approached Lu Sanyuan with a big smile to talk to him, which made him retract his gaze. He began to converse cheerfully with the Yin Yang Path Master.

Soon after, the bride's escort returned. The bridal carriage stopped by the entrance. A bride with a red veil over her head slowly walked in, supported by her maids.

When they saw her fair and graceful figure, many people sighed in astonishment. They shot Fang Long envious looks.

*Just what kind of damned luck does that guy have?*

Even Zhang Zitong couldn't help but sigh in amazement. The saintess really was as beautiful as a goddess. Even though her face was covered under the red veil, just the natural grace she walked with tugged at the heartstrings of the people watching. That wasn't something she could compare to at all. Previously, she had seen that the Heavenly Devil Path's Pan Qiaoqiao was also full of charm, but she was still inferior to the saintess.

...

Shortly after, the bride entered the main hall. The Yin Yang Path Master gave her a look.

However, someone suddenly asked, "Why isn't the groom leading the bride in yet? We're about to celebrate the wedding soon!"

Fang Long seemed to awaken from a daydream. He quickly ran over.

The Yin Yang Path Master bowed and invited Lu Sanyuan to sit in the seat of honor. Lu Sanyuan replied with a smile, "You are the host here today, and the newly married will bow to you in honor. What would I do in that seat? I'll be fine sitting below."

The Yin Yang Path Master Fang Zhonghe bowed and said, "The Path-Sect Master[1] is the wedding witness, as well as the heaven and earth of our Holy Sect. If your respected self won't sit in the seat of honor, how could we dare?"

The elders all cursed inwardly.

*This guy's obsequious attitude is truly nauseating.*

However, none of them dared to express anything.

Meanwhile, the middle-ranking members of the sect who were a bit farther away were stunned.

*How did the Vice Sect Master become the Holy Sect's heaven and earth? What about Sect Master Yun?*

Lu Sanyuan was clearly very satisfied with the Yin Yang Path Master's attitude. He thus nodded and said, "Since brother Fang has invited me to do so with such hospitality, it would be impolite to refuse."

Meanwhile, Li Feiqing watched as Fang Long approached the saintess. The wedding was already about to start, so he was feeling incredibly nervous. Previously, he'd already coordinated with that bastard Fang Biao, and yet he couldn't find the other person at all. He wondered if something had happened. And what was Pan Qiaoqiao doing? Why did he still not see any sign of her? There was no way those two could have eloped, right?

The World School's Wang Cong moved over to his side and quietly said, "Brother Li, Pan Qiaoqiao has died."

"Died?" Li Feiqing repeated. His entire body trembled. He quickly asked about what had happened.

Wang Cong then gave him a summary of the assassination on the way. The Freedom Path's members were all immersed in the arts, so their information network was naturally not as good as the World School's.

Li Feiqing's expression darkened. He hissed, "Just what the hell was Pan Qiaoqiao doing? Didn't we already decide to switch her out in the bridal room? Why did she do it ahead of time, even hiding it from us?"

"It's already meaningless to ask about those things. She's already dead," Wang Cong said with a sigh, "Things are way too strange. I'm backing out, but I wish brother Li the best." He shook his head and left afterward.

Li Feiqing was left standing there with a blank expression. His fists were clenched so tightly that his fingernails dug into his flesh. He knew everything was over. Fang Biao was missing, Pan Qiaoqiao had been assassinated, and Wang Cong had backed out. Their meticulously-made plan was now all

wasted effort. There was no way he could succeed all alone. Could it be that he really just had to watch as the woman he loved married another?

When he saw Fang Long reach out toward the embroidered sphere the saintess was carrying with a big smile, his eyes turned completely red. At that moment, he couldn't hear any of the noisy surroundings. All of his attention was on the bride and groom.

In the end, he took a deep breath and roared, "Stop!"

Fang Long jumped in fright and reflexively pulled back his hand.

The entire hall also fell silent, and the people all looked at Li Feiqing. Those who were standing closest to him moved aside, as if they were worried that they would be associated with him.

The Yin Yang Path Master gave the Freedom Path Master an unhappy look and asked, "Brother Hua, what is going on here?"

The Freedom Path Master smiled apologetically, replying, "Brother Fang, please do not worry. I will properly discipline that idiot disciple." Afterward, he immediately shouted with an angry expression, "Idiot disciple, this is the Yin Yang Path's day of celebration! What kind of nonsense are you creating here? Back down this instant!"

At this point, Li Feiqing was going for broke, however. He hollered, "I feel as if something isn't right with this wedding! There's no way the saintess would marry Fang Long!"

A group of people immediately became rowdy. It was obvious that there were many people who admired Qiu Honglei, and none of them wanted her to marry Fang Long.

When he heard that, Fang Long frowned and replied, "Mister Li, I invited you out of good intentions, and yet you insist on causing trouble here. In that case, you cannot blame me for doing what a host must."

He made a gesture with his eyes, and his trusted aides rushed out to chase Li Feiqing away.

However, Wang Cong stepped forward between them and said, "Brother Li, what you said has no proof or basis. Aren't your words going a bit too far?"

A grateful look appeared in Li Feiqing's eyes. Even though Wang Cong appeared to be criticizing him, his body blocked the aides' path and gave him a chance to continue speaking. As such, he continued, "In all these years, the saintess has never shown any interest in Fang Long. That's something everyone can see with their own eyes! They know she doesn't like Fang Long, so how could she possibly suddenly agree to marry him?"

Many people nodded. That was also what they were confused about. Everything was too abnormal. A lot of them even felt that their own relationship with the saintess was better than that of Fang Long. She had always lived cleanly and honestly, hating the scoundrels from the Yin Yang Path the most.

Fang Long's expression darkened. He replied, "With things like emotions, who can say for certain? The saintess does normally treat me indifferently, but that is nothing more than a reflection of how much she cares about me. The more you care about someone, the more you avoid them and try not to show it."

"Tsk~" Sounds of disapproval filled the air from all around. It was clear that the onlookers didn't like his answer.

Fang Long's face twitched. He secretly looked toward the higher seats and saw that Lu Sanyuan and the others were drinking tea with indifferent expressions. They clearly intended to test his ability to handle this crisis. He gritted his teeth and said, "Mister Li, I know that you have always liked the saintess and cannot accept the reality that she is marrying me. So, I can just let bygones be bygones over your actions today. However, I advise you to take this offer and not do anything foolish because of your feelings."

Those who were on good terms with him voiced their agreement. They reprimanded Li Feiqing for causing trouble all because he was jealous and liked the saintess. Meanwhile, when they heard those words, the ones who had spoken up for Li Feiqing also became a bit hesitant. Li Feiqing was a fanatical pursuer of the saintess; that was something everyone knew. Perhaps he really was just causing trouble.

When he saw that the people around him were starting to give in, Li Feiqing immediately panicked. He continued, "The saintess is Sect Master Yun's beloved disciple, but why isn't the sect master here on such an important day? Saintess, were you fooled?"

When he heard that, Lu Sanyuan's eyes narrowed slightly. The people around him immediately felt a chill.

The Freedom Path Master Hua Feihua hurriedly exclaimed, "Idiot disciple, what are you saying? Sect Master Yun is cultivating in seclusion and cannot leave. She has already sent some people to express her blessings."

"That is right," Elder Xi from the Heavenly Devil School said as he stood up. "I am here on behalf of Sect Master Yun to participate in niece Qiu's wedding, to offer her blessings on the sect master's behalf."

Many people present nodded. Elder Xi's status in the Heavenly Devil School was extremely high, making him practically number two among them. Since he had spoken up, he had to be expressing Sect Master Yun's intent.

When he saw the current situation, Li Feiqing couldn't help but feel despair. He naturally didn't know what was happening among the higher-ups and just assumed Sect Master Yun really had agreed to the wedding.

The Yin Yang Path Master got up and said with a smile, "I know that everyone here might still have some misgivings, but this is the conclusion Sect Master Yun and I discussed. Furthermore, Sect Master Lu can also serve as a witness. If everyone still doesn't believe me, you can ask the Saintess and see if she agrees to all of this or not." He knew that the overall trend was already on his side. But of course, after the fact, people would start gossiping, so it was best to dispel those doubts as early as possible so they wouldn't speculate wantonly.

Lu Sanyuan nodded. It was still Fang Zhonghe who acted with the most experience here. Indeed, they couldn't let these people plant seeds of doubt at this juncture. As for Qiu Honglei, he wasn't too worried that she would say stupid things. After all, she was still worried about her master's safety.

When he heard what Fang Zhonghe said, Li Feiqing looked at the bride in despair, then asked, "Saintess, are you truly willing to marry Fang Long?"

Everyone else also turned to look at her, but they all knew that since the saintess had worn the wedding clothes here, what else could that mean but her agreement?

Fang Long grinned. He felt a sense of satisfaction from seeing the powerlessness and madness of his rivals in love. That was precisely the

reason why dominating exceptional beauties, especially beauties with extraordinary statuses, felt so incredible.

Just then, Qiu Honglei removed the red veil from her head and tossed it aside. She said in a powerful and resonant voice, “No, I don't wish to!”

The Yin Yang Path's father and son's smiles immediately froze on their faces. Even Lu Sanyuan's hand froze as he was raising his teacup.

The Freedom Path and World Path masters exchanged a look. They could both see the delight in each other's eyes.

Meanwhile, the Secret Path Master was confused. He couldn't help but give Lu Sanyuan next to him a look.

The place first fell silent, then erupted into a commotion. This news was too explosive!

The saintess was actually unwilling! Then why had she come here? Could it be that she had been forced to? If so, what about the part about Sect Master Yun giving her approval? Even so, Sect Master Yun didn't seem to have made an appearance...

All sorts of suspicions spread among the crowd. Many people's expressions immediately grew grave.

Li Feiqing's entire body was shaking from excitement. Not even he had expected things to end up like this.

*Right... How could the woman I like have such poor taste and favor someone like Fang Long?*

Elder Xi stood up and said with an insincere smile, “Honglei, don't be a child. Could it be that you are going to go against your master's orders?” He made sure to mention Yun Jianyue to warn her against speaking up. At the same time, he also moved closer, ready to subdue her at a moment's notice.

“My master never gave me such orders. This is nothing more than a fake decree you made up!” Qiu Honglei retorted with a sneer. At the same time, she looked at Lu Sanyuan and the others, remembering every single person there.

“Nonsense! There were some other elders present when your master gave those orders. You can ask them if you do not believe me,” Elder Xi said with a smile. “What, could it be that this old one would deceive everyone despite my reputation and prestige?”

Many people nodded inwardly. Elder Xi’s status in the Heavenly Devil School was high, and he was someone of good moral standing and reputation. There was indeed no reason for him to lie.

Suddenly, an ice-cold voice called out, “You are indeed fooling everyone. When have I ever agreed to this wedding?!”

Immediately after, a woman flew into the courtyard. When he saw who it was, Lu Sanyuan immediately stood up.

*How could it be her?!*

Many people present became incredibly shocked. All of them shouted out excitedly, “Sect Master Yun, Sect Master Yun!”

The woman’s expression was cold, and her entire body was surging with killing intent. Who else could it be but Yun Jianyue?

Only Qiu Honglei had a strange expression, because she knew it wasn’t actually her master. She thought back to how ridiculous it had sounded when Ah Zu first told her about his plan.

She'd never expected his appearance-changing skill to be this incredible!

1. Lu Sanyuan is the Path Master of the Unfeeling Path and the Vice Sect Master of the Devil Sect. ?

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## **Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2011: Imposter**

Chapter 2011: Imposter

Zu An’s inner world was actually completely shattered. He'd never expected to one day have to become a woman.



*Big sis Yun, big sis Yun, look at how much I've sacrificed for you... How will you make it up to me in the future?*

He secretly gave the two big melons in front of his chest a little prop. His entire body felt uncomfortable.

Of course, he hadn't gone so far as to change his body into a woman's completely. The appearance-changing skill wasn't that miraculous either. Even though he did have a skill to become a woman, he definitely wouldn't use that! He had only changed his face, hairstyle, and outfit to match Yun Jianyue. Fortunately, Yun Jianyue had a tall figure, so he didn't have to shrink his frame too much.

Many sect members who didn't know the truth bowed to her. After all, Yun Jianyue's prestige over the years had been quite high.

The Yin Yang Path Master and the others looked at Lu Sanyuan with expressions of alarm.

After his initial shock, Lu Sanyuan reacted quickly. He gave the Yin Yang Path Master a look and said through ki transmission, "Go and expose her. There is no way she could be Yun Jianyue."

The Yin Yang Path Master swallowed with difficulty and replied, "But... But what if it really is her?"

"There is no 'what if'." Lu Sanyuan said calmly. Even if the person before them was real, they still had to prove that she was a fake.

When he saw the killing intent in Lu Sanyuan's eyes, Yin Yang Path Master took a deep breath. He didn't have any way out in this situation, so he could only brace himself and walk forward.

Suddenly, Lu Sanyuan gave his nearby direct disciple Ding Xia a look. Ding Xia nodded and left silently. Lu Sanyuan sighed in relief.

*This kid Ding Xia is extremely reliable. It was him who secretly wiped out the forces loyal to Yun Jianyue, and he only came back not too long ago, granting us a useful helping hand.*

Zhang Zitong, who had always been hiding in the crowd, silently followed Ding Xia. She was full of admiration.

*Sir really is amazingly brilliant! He actually knew that Lu Sanyuan would secretly order someone to leave.*

*But where is sir? Why isn't he back yet? Nothing happened to him, right?*

How could she possibly know that the Sir Eleven she always thinking about was actually standing right in front of her as a woman? There was no way Zu An would tell her about something so awkward.

...

Meanwhile, the Yin Yang Path Master walked over. He summoned his courage and looked at Zu An, saying, "You... You aren't Sect Master Yun. Just who are you to dare impersonate Sect Master Yun?!"

Everyone in the hall was stunned. What kind of situation was this? Where did the Yin Yang Path Master get the courage to go against Sect Master Yun? Only certain people who had received bits and pieces of special information began to think to themselves.

Zu An laughed, replying, "Why do you think I'm not Sect Master Yun?"

"Of course I know..." Midway through his sentence, the Yin Yang Path Master's expression stiffened. He naturally knew what kind of condition Yun Jianyue was really in, but how could he say it in front of so many people? Fortunately, he suddenly thought of something and said, "Sect Master Yun is currently at a critical juncture in her cultivation. She told us that she wouldn't come out for quite some time, so how could she possibly be here?"

Immediately after, he looked at Elder Xi and said, "Elder Xi, as someone who is also from the Heavenly Devil School, I believe you are the most familiar with Yun Jianyue. Do you think this one is real or fake?"

Elder Xi grimaced inwardly. He had never expected such a situation to appear. With how things stood, however, he could only brace himself. He put on an act and sized up Zu An. He thought that it was really Yun Jianyue who had made an appearance, but after giving Zu An a few looks, he stared blankly for a moment. Then, he roared with laughter, saying, "This person is fake; she is definitely not Yun Jian... ahem, definitely not Sect Master Yun!"

This person was really similar, but there were some slight details that he could still recognize as being off. Of course, if he hadn't known that Yun Jianyue

had no chance of being here and that he was working backward after knowing the answer, he likely wouldn't have noticed those slight differences.

Li Feiqing immediately became nervous. He exclaimed, "That's clearly Sect Master Yun! We're all here, and we're not blind."

On the elevated platform, Lu Sanyuan gave the Freedom Path Master a pensive look. He thought to himself, *Is this kid really doing this brazenly out of his admiration for Qiu Honglei, or did the path master incite him to do this?* Even so, he didn't see anything strange from the Freedom Path Master's expression.

Elder Xi's expression turned cold. He said, "Sect Master Yun is honored and glorious. A young disciple can only bow to her from afar! Is your understanding of her greater than mine as a Heavenly Devil Path elder?"

Li Feiqing was at a loss for words. That was indeed the case, as disciples like them were too far in status from Yun Jianyue, so there was no way they could know her that well.

Suddenly, there was a lovable laugh. Qiu Honglei walked up to Zu An's side and replied, "I don't think Elder Xi understands my master as well as I do, right? This is clearly my master, and yet you're saying she isn't. Just what kinds of schemes are you planning?"

When they heard those words, the sect members who were starting to be a bit swayed snapped out of their daze.

*Right, she clearly looks exactly the same as Sect Master Yun, and even the saintess is testifying for her, so how could she still be fake? And yet this Elder Xi instead insists she's fake, as well as that Yin Yang Path Master. What kind of plot are these two colluding on?*

When they thought about how the saintess was being mysteriously married off to the Yin Yang Path's Fang Long, many people began to pick up on something.

*A plot! There is definitely some conspiracy at play!*

Qiu Honglei was even leaning against Zu An. When the crowd saw their intimate behavior, no one had any more suspicions. Everyone in the sect

knew that Sect Master Yun and the saintess were like mother and daughter. This level of closeness wasn't something that could be acted out.

They didn't know that Qiu Honglei was actually secretly kneading Zu An's chest, asking through ki, "Just what kind of disguise did you use to look so similar to her?"

Zu An was annoyed. He quickly replied through voice transmission, "Stop kneading them already. You'll make them explode. I used pears."

Qiu Honglei really had to hold herself back. If it weren't because they were in the wrong place for it, she would have already been rocking back and forth with laughter. She replied, "Stop talking, please... Your getup really looks pretty good. Huh? Wait, why do you know my master's measurements so well? There's no difference at all."

Zu An was speechless. Goosebumps covered his entire body. Fortunately, he reacted quickly and said, "For people at my cultivation rank, our eyesight is obviously first-rate. It's not hard for us to estimate these kinds of things."

"Hmph, you've actually been sneaking secret looks at master! I'm definitely going to tell on you later," Qiu Honglei replied.

Zu An had a strange expression.

*That's not all, I even personally... Ahem.*

...

Elder Xi quickly spoke about the ways in which Zu An was different from Yun Jianyue. If he had started with that, perhaps the others would really have started doubting; however, at this point, nothing he said mattered anymore. They all thought he was just making things up.

Elder Xi was really panicking now. He snapped, "Then this old one will prove it!"

He rushed forth and grabbed at Zu An with a raven-like claw. He knew fully well that this person could impersonate Yun Jianyue's face, but there was no way they could impersonate her cultivation. He was basically the number two figure of the Heavenly Devil School, so his cultivation was naturally profound.

As he moved, his hands were filled with black energy, and the air around him even warped a bit.

Many people narrowed their eyes.

*As expected of Elder Xi, he's already half a step to the grandmaster rank!*

*It seems he'll become a true grandmaster not too long from now.*

Qiu Honglei said with a cold snort, "Hmph, you're not qualified to be my master's match!"

Then, her figure moved quickly. Her body bent like a drawn bow.

Everyone present sighed in amazement. The saintess' waist really was slender and flexible!

In just a few moments, Qiu Honglei's hand erupted with a streak of blinding light. Soon after, the light condensed into a sharp arrow and flew forth.

Arrow of Judgment!

Everyone present recognized the attack. It was the saintess' ultimate move.

Many people cried out, warning Elder Xi to go easy so he wouldn't hurt her.

Elder Xi sneered.

*This girl really overestimates her own abilities. She dares to make me her enemy? It seems Yun Jianyue has spoiled her too much, to the point where she really thinks she's without equal in this world!*

He used fifty percent of his cultivation and sent a black hand imprint at the arrow of light. He felt that bit of power was already more than enough to defeat a young junior. Meanwhile, more of his attention was on Zu An. This mysterious person was actually able to impersonate Yun Jianyue! He felt that he couldn't really see through them.

However, his expression quickly changed. The arrow of light was incredibly sharp and hard to stop. It pierced straight through his hand imprint. Elder Xi tried to change his attack, but it was already too late. The arrow tore through everything with irresistible force and penetrated his palm. He screamed

bitterly and dropped from the air. As he looked at his bleeding palm, he was a bit shocked.

Gasps filled the air from all round the hall. They hadn't expected the awe-inspiring Elder Xi to be so useless! He couldn't even block the attack of a junior, and yet he was trying to challenge the master?

Lu Sanyuan and the others' expressions turned a bit cold. Elder Xi had actually underestimated his opponent? He really wasn't someone suited to shoulder heavy responsibility. They were already thinking of gradually removing him from their plans, as there was no need to share benefits with such trash.

*Even so, that lass Qiu Honglei is a bit surprising. Even if Elder Xi underestimated her, he shouldn't be someone she could defeat at her age. Ding Xia's aptitude is already high enough, and I personally taught him with great care, but his current cultivation doesn't seem to be up to par with hers.*

*She was clearly not this strong a few months ago. Just what did she go through since then?*

Qiu Honglei smiled at Zu An rather proudly, as if to say, "Look at how amazing I am! Praise me!"

Sure enough, Zu An smiled and nodded, saying, "Honglei's efforts in seclusion weren't for nothing. It seems you've already mastered what you received earlier. However, that was also thanks to your master."

Qiu Honglei's face reddened, as she now realized what he was implying. She had still actually been a bit off from perfection before. But that day, when the two of them finally connected, after the waves after waves of battering, and especially the flooding rich with life force and spiritual ki, she'd been shocked to discover that the shackles restraining her fully unraveled. Her cultivation realm had even become a bit higher.

At the time, she'd been really happy, but also a bit gloomy.

*Could it be that the reason why Chuyan was able to cultivate so quickly, and yet I felt as if I couldn't catch up no matter what, was because of this difference?!*

“The saintess is amazing!” The Treasure Hunter Path’s Fatty Hu was the first to shout in praise. He was just here to watch something interesting and didn’t mind things getting even more out of hand.

What followed was a tremendous rush of cheers in support. Many young disciples’ faces even turned red. After all, Qiu Honglei was the target of their admiration to begin with. Not only was she beautiful, her cultivation had also reached such a high level. Wasn’t this a goddess among goddesses?

When he sensed the atmosphere, the Yin Yang Path Master’s expression became a bit unhappy. He could also sense Lu Sanyuan looking at him, and knew he couldn’t continue to stall. As such, he took a step forward and looked coldly at Zu An, saying, “This old one wishes to ask your respected self for a bit of guidance. You wouldn’t make a young junior go against me, would you?”

He now felt a bit more at ease. Qiu Honglei had been in a rush to act, likely to shield this imposter. It seemed their cultivation wasn’t any good after all, and they’d be exposed as soon as they try to fight.

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Chapter 2012: You Reap What You’ve Sown

As for Qiu Honglei, the Yin Yang Path Master wasn’t worried about her at all. He wasn’t as stupid as Elder Xi. Using the previous example as a lesson, he wouldn’t underestimate his opponent again. Furthermore, his cultivation was much higher than Elder Xi’s. Elder Xi was only half a step into the grandmaster rank, while he had already been at the grandmaster rank for many years. As such, if Qiu Honglei still wanted to protect this imposter, he wouldn’t mind just crippling her here.

*Hmph, she refuses to live as a happy daughter-in-law. Then in that case, I’ll turn her into my own slave!*

*This woman is quite pretty. I was going to look for a chance after letting her marry my son first, but it seems I don’t have to share her with my son anymore.*

As if she could read the evil thoughts in his eyes, Qiu Honglei was furious. With a swing of her hand, she brought out the Moon Demon Blade and said, "This junior will request some pointers from senior then!"

After staying around Zu An for so long, she had seen him win from positions of weakness again and again, facing countless opponents at a higher rank than him. That gave her a bit more courage too, making her want to learn from Ah Zu. Of course, she didn't do so rashly without thinking. Rather, she really had gained a lot of benefits from the secret dungeon this time. Whether in terms of her cultivation or the growth in her mentality and worldview, she now had a fighting chance.

"You're going to fight against me?" the Yin Yang Path Master replied. He smiled and asked Zu An, "Is the imposter too scared to fight, so you can only make her throw her life away?"

Many people became nervous and cried out, "Sect Master Yun, the saintess is still young. Please help her!"

In their eyes, even though Qiu Honglei's talent was exceptional, she hadn't even been cultivating for twenty years. Compared to a monster like the Yin Yang Path Master, she was still far off. Earlier, even though she had won against Elder Xi, that was because he had underestimated his enemy. This time, the Yin Yang Path Master definitely wouldn't make the same mistake.

"Throw her life away?" Zu An replied calmly. "It's hard to say who will die and who will live just yet."

He also recognized Qiu Honglei's current condition. Because she had just won against Elder Xi, she was now brimming with fighting spirit. If she won here, she would make rapid progress in her cultivation, and her future achievements would be unlimited. How could he not give her such a chance?

"Hahaha! Good, very good!" The Yin Yang Path Master roared with laughter, his voice echoing through the entire hall.

Many people's expressions changed. They felt their internal energies stir chaotically from the laughter, and even their minds became dizzy.

*As expected of one of the four overlords, Fang Zhonghe's cultivation is truly shocking.*



*He's using this laughter on purpose to break down the saintess' wits and fighting spirit. Using this kind of method against a junior really is shameless.*

Li Feiqing endured the strong feeling of disgust and urgently shouted, "Saintess, you can't win against him! Just let Sect Master Yun fight!"

When she sensed his urgency and concern, Qiu Honglei nodded slightly toward him and said, "Thank you, brother Li, but I know what I'm doing."

At this point, who knew how many people had already betrayed her master? Li Feiqing was a rare individual who stood by their side, so she naturally couldn't treat him rudely.

As he listened to their conversation, Fang Long was furious. He couldn't help but remark, "Mister Li, don't you know that bootlickers never meet good ends? Look at how much you're licking! Honglei will at most show you a smile; do you think she'll actually like you? And yet look at you, you have no regard left for your own prospects and life! How laughable!"

Li Feiqing's expression stiffened as he said, "Fang Long, you don't understand what love is at all. When you like someone, it isn't about obtaining her, but rather wishing her a lifetime of happiness. As for your reputation, everyone inside and outside the sect knows what kind of person you are. They all know what kind of scummy life you live. Why would I ever want the saintess to marry you and live a life of suffering?"

"You deceive others and yourself. These are nothing more than words of the defeated. You can just watch what kind of happiness the saintess and I will share!" Fang Long retorted mockingly.

"Shut your mouth!" the Yin Yang Path Master snapped, his expression turning rather unpleasant.

Just what kind of situation were they in now? And yet this brat was still fighting over his love rival! He had no awareness of the situation at all! More importantly, his earlier laughter that had been meant as a show of strength now seemed like a complete joke. How could he continue laughing?

He could only say to Qiu Honglei, "Martial niece, you may go first. I'll give you three moves, or else others might blame me for bullying the weak."

Qiu Honglei replied with a smile, "Didn't you already make the first move on your own just now?"

Many people gasped at what she said. Strictly speaking, Fang Zhonghe's laughter was an attack, and yet he was now saying these kinds of words. He really was two-faced!

No matter how thick the Yin Yang Path Master's skin was, he was still so embarrassed that his toes almost bore through the floor.

In that instant, Qiu Honglei suddenly moved. Light erupted in her hand, and a string of light spheres fired at the Yin Yang Path Master. There were some that moved slowly and others that moved quickly, so if one tried to dodge, they'd easily make a mistake. They'd lose the initiative, and what awaited them then would be a vicious storm of attacks. In the past, during Violet Mountain's great competition, this attack of hers had left many opponents in a tough situation.

The Yin Yang Path Master said with a sneer, "Hmph, just some small tricks!"

As someone who was also in the Devil Sect, he naturally knew how this attack worked. As such, he didn't try to avoid it and instead swept out his sleeves. The spheres of light were all swept away, and vanished. Seeing as he would risk revealing an opening if he tried to avoid them, he'd decided to just defeat the move with sheer force.

Li Feiqing and the others sighed in pity. The difference was just too great; this wasn't a battle that could even be won in the first place...

Suddenly, a burst of strong light flickered. Many young disciples reflexively closed their eyes. Even elder-level figures couldn't help but narrow their eyes. They suddenly realized that all of this was part of the saintess' strategy. She knew that the bullets of light couldn't win against the Yin Yang Path Master, so she'd prepared a follow-up attack.

"This is your second move," the Yin Yang Path Master said as he closed his eyes and sent his palm slamming toward one side, forcing Qiu Honglei's body back. He continued, "You know nothing about the grandmaster rank. At our level, even if our eyes are closed, we can still sense even a blade's movements on the breeze."

"Be careful!" Lu Sanyuan immediately warned him.

The Yin Yang Path Master was stunned. Suddenly, the space behind him split open, revealing a flickering sea of stars. It was as if a corner of the cosmos had been exposed. Immediately after, a massive blade shot out from that rift. A few with more profound cultivations immediately realized that it was a magnified version of the Moon Demon Blade.

The Yin Yang Path Master immediately became vigilant. He quickly turned around to protect himself. His sleeves swelled up like balls to block the attack.

*Boom!*

A terrifying ripple rushed in all directions. The tables and chairs in the hall were overturned, and the young disciples were all blown backward, ending up in a sorry state. The entire hall began to rock back and forth intensely. The runes protecting the place flickered intensely, barely keeping it together and preventing it from collapsing.

Qiu Honglei kicked off the ground with her feet, gracefully leaping out of the fighting ring, then cupped her hands toward her opponent and said, "Path Master Fang, you let me win!"

The smoke and dust settled. The onlookers now saw that Fang Zhonghe's sleeves had already been ripped. Even though there were no wounds on his arms, a young junior had managed to ruin his sleeves. To a certain extent, that was already a loss.

Qiu Honglei sighed in relief. She actually knew that there was quite a large difference between her own strength and the Yin Yang Path Master's. If it were a fair fight, there was no chance for her to win at all. That was why she had deliberately angered him, then used some pretty, but useless tactics against this true expert. When her opponent lowered her guard, that was when she could deal her killing blow.

However, that so-called killing blow was also just a ruse. She'd already known that there was no chance of her killing the opponent. As such, she had only pretended to unleash all of her killing intent to make him think that she wanted to kill him. That way, he wouldn't bother with keeping his sleeves intact and would reflexively focus on protecting his body. That was where her opportunity lay. She had then used the Moon Demon Blades' sharpness and Nebula Rend's power to destroy his sleeves.

Then, she immediately used those words to put him in an awkward position. Too many people were watching, and she could be considered to have won. The opponent was a glorious path master, after all, so there was no way he would insist on continuing this competition.

The Freedom Path Master Hua Feihua couldn't help but laugh loudly, remarking, "As expected, the younger generations will surpass us in time!"

The World School Master Chen Taogong also stroked his round face and said while nodding, "The saintess' strength is indeed impressive and admirable."

Qiu Honglei's admirers were cheering even louder. Many people shouted 'Saintess, I love you'.

Fang Zhonghe began breathing quickly. He knew fully well that he had already fallen for the saintess' ploy. His face flickered between green and red.

However, he suddenly roared in anger, "This match isn't over! When did we decide victory and defeat?" As soon as he spoke, he instantly threw himself at Qiu Honglei.

Everyone in the surroundings cursed loudly.

"Fang Zhonghe, do you have no sense of shame?!"

"Dogshit overlord, can you not take a loss?"

"Hurry and save the saintess!"

...

Unfortunately, they were too far away to help her, and the ones who could help her had too many misgivings. They could only watch as Fang Zhonghe got closer and closer to Qiu Honglei. His palm flickered with a mysterious pink color. This was the ultimate skill he was proudest of: The Ninefold Palm!

This was a palm that had been soaked in countless drugs over many decades. His palm had absorbed their medicinal strength, then refined them nine times; in the end, they combined to form this attack! His palm represented the pinnacle of aphrodisiac drugs in this world. If one were to be hit by it, it would immediately activate one's desire and turn them into a beast. It was especially effective against women.

He was now just fighting out of pure anger. He had already made up his mind to make her suffer a complete defeat, to make her fall from grace.

*Hmph, what saintess? I'm going to turn you into a bitch in front of everyone's eyes. Let's see if there'll still be so many people who want to follow you!*

Qiu Honglei's expression changed. She hadn't expected Fang Zhonghe to be so shameless. He was actually going to do something like this in front of everyone!

Even though she didn't know the name of the attack, she could guess a thing or two from the pink light. She reflexively backed up, because she knew she absolutely couldn't let that palm touch her. Unfortunately, he was too fast and she couldn't avoid it at all.

Suddenly, Zu An said from behind her, "Don't be scared. Give him a palm right back."

Qiu Honglei was stunned. She instinctively wanted to avoid her opponent's palm, but in the end, she chose to trust her lover.

When he saw that Qiu Honglei actually reached out her small, tender white hand toward him, Fang Zhonghe sneered.

*This stupid lass really doesn't want to live any longer!*

An incredibly powerful palm force suddenly rushed forth. At first, he had felt that Qiu Honglei's palm strength was just like a brook, while his was a great river that could easily swallow her up. But compared to that palm, he now felt as if he were facing an ocean, one that was vast and limitless! He could feel the pink energy around his palm being forced right back, instantly surrounding his entire body. He screamed miserably and flew backward, slamming into the ground.

Nearby, Fang Long immediately rushed over to support him, asking, "Father, what's wrong?"

However, who would have thought that Fang Zhonghe's eyes would be filled with a berserk pink aura? He grabbed Fang Long and pressed him down onto the ground, crying out, "Hurry and give it to me, I want it!"

Everyone present was filled with confusion.

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## Chapter 2013: The Pressure of Numbers

The events had simply happened too quickly. Just a second before, people had been cursing Fang Zhonghe for being shameless. He had clearly already lost, and yet he couldn't take the loss and continued to assault a junior. Furthermore, he had used such a despicable attack against the saintess!

Even though many people didn't know the exact details behind his Ninefold Palm, judging from how it looked and the Yin Yang Path's way of doing things, it wasn't hard to guess what he wanted to do. And yet, in the blink of an eye, Fang Zhonghe had been forced back by the saintess' attack!

They rubbed their eyes. Was there something wrong with the world today or something? The saintess had first defeated Elder Xi, and then the Yin Yang Path Master was defeated as well?

However, they didn't have the time to worry about that, because they suddenly heard the sound of cloth tearing. Fang Zhonghe tore off Fang Long's clothes, then pressed the latter under him. Judging from the looks of things, he was going to do his own son right there.

"Dad, it's me!" Fang Long protested as he struggled frantically, but how could he compare to his father in strength?

He frequently bullied women just like this and really enjoyed their struggles, because that gave him a stronger feeling of domination after. He had just never expected that one day, he would also be the victim of this kind of situation...

Suddenly, he felt his lower half become a bit cold. His pants had been pulled straight off.

*I'm done for, I'm finished!*

Fang Long was about to cry. He was actually being treated this way by another man, and it was even his own father, no less. Worst of all, it was in front of all of these people! Even if he survived this ordeal, he'd become a

laughingstock for the entire world. He wouldn't be able to continue living in this world at all.

Even Li Feiqing, who loathed him, couldn't help but breathe in deeply. This scene was just too harsh on the eyes to watch.

Many onlookers subconsciously clutched their bottoms, as if they were scared of something.

The Heavenly Devil School's female disciples all clutched their faces in shock, but the gaps between their fingers were quite wide. Judging from their expressions, they even seemed a bit excited.

“Hmph!”

A cold snort filled the air. Fang Zhonghe screamed miserably as he was blasted flying. He smashed into a large tree, and blood gushed out of his mouth.

Lu Sanyuan was standing nearby with a furious expression. He already believed himself to be the master of the sect, so how could he permit something like this to happen?

The Freedom Path Master and World School Master exchanged a look. They both saw the horror in each other's eyes.

Even though Fang Zhonghe hadn't managed to use all of his poison skills, he still had grandmaster rank cultivation. Someone this strong had been sent flying so far without even needing to make direct contact, and ended up seriously injured... Lu Sanyuan's cultivation seemed to be much higher than what they had previously anticipated!

A huge uproar erupted. Fang Zhonghe's drugs had activated fully and he had completely lost his mind. He hugged the tree next to him and began frantically humping it. His pants were soon a bloody mess. The sight made the onlookers' scalps go numb.

Fang Long swallowed with difficulty. If that had happened to him, the one taking all of that would be him... He immediately clung to Lu Sanyuan's feet with tears of gratitude, crying out, “Thank you, Sect Master Lu! Thank you, Sect Master Lu!” His anus hadn't ended up becoming a sunflower. He was so grateful that he was willing to treat Lu Sanyuan as his father.

Lu Sanyuan kicked him away in disgust. Then, he looked at Zu An with a grave expression while remarking, "I didn't expect junior sister's cultivation to have made progress again."

Even though others hadn't noticed anything, how could something like this escape his eyes? When Qiu Honglei and the Yin Yang Path Master's palms met, the 'Yun Jianyue' behind Qiu Honglei had secretly infused their own ki into her. That was how Qiu Honglei had been able to send Fang Zhonghe's poison right back at him.

At first, he had thought that there was no way this could be Yun Jianyue. But apart from her, who else in all of the Lake of Hatred could accomplish such a thing? Even though he didn't understand why she wasn't trapped right now, thinking about that was already meaningless. The first priority was dealing with the master and disciple.

Zu An smiled and replied, "I'm actually more impressed with Honglei's progress as of late. She can even compare with those of the older generation now."

Qiu Honglei gave him a look with a reddened face.

*This guy is talking as if he's full of experience. It's actually pretty similar to master. I wonder just how he became so familiar with master's way of talking.*

However, she was filled with more happiness than anything right now. He had praised her in front of everyone and gave her all the credit for winning against the Yin Yang Path Master. As a cultivator, she knew just how much help the confidence of winning brought, especially in a battle like this where the difference was so tremendous.

"The saintess is indeed formidable," Lu Sanyuan said; he had to acknowledge Qiu Honglei's talent. Even if Yun Jianyue had helped her, the one who had stepped forward was her. Whether it was her tactics or her mentality, they were both formidable. "I admit that I am inferior to you in raising disciples."

"There's no need for you to try to praise me," Zu An said coldly. "You've started this mess of a rebellion, so it's time that we settle things."

Another commotion erupted. Just a moment prior, they had been watching Fang Zhonghe compete to see who was tougher, like spectators from the



peanut gallery. How could they have expected to suddenly hear such explosive news?

*What is Sect Master Yun implying? It seems as if she's saying that the vice sect master is plotting a rebellion!*

That meant what their Vice Sect Master had previously said about Sect Master Yun needing to remain in seclusion could signify much more...

The Freedom Path and World School Masters exchanged a look. They both saw the smile on the corners of each other's mouths. The two of them had already noticed that something was off earlier, but they had no proof. That was why one had allowed their disciple to do what they wanted, while the other had let their disciple try to ruin the wedding.

At first, they'd just wanted to prevent the Heavenly Devil School and Yin Yang Path from completely allying together. If that happened, the rest of them would have become heavily pressured. They had never expected their plans to turn out even better than expected! Now, not only was the wedding ruined, Yun Jianyue's appearance made it so that she could very well fight against Lu Sanyuan.

Lu Sanyuan chuckled, replying, "You're going to settle things with me? I fear that martial sister doesn't fully understand the current situation yet."

With a wave of his hand, endless soldiers stormed in from outside, surrounding everyone present. Countless archers appeared around the courtyard walls, aiming their sharp arrows at those within. These were all armor piercing arrows used on the battlefield. They flickered with blue runes that specialized in breaking through the protective barriers of cultivators.

Many people present changed their expressions. An elder couldn't help but ask, "Sect Master Lu, what is the meaning of this?"

"What is the meaning of this?" Lu Sanyuan repeated. He said proudly, "Obviously, it means this: Submit to me and prosper, or oppose me and perish!"

As he spoke, his long hair moved around behind him despite there being no wind. His clothes began to flutter too.

As for the Devil Sect's people, they were shocked. The terrifying pressure he released made all of them tremble in fear. They couldn't produce the slightest intent of rebellion, and felt that just a single finger of his could crush them to death.

"Is this... Is this the power of an earth immortal?" the World School Master said, flabbergasted.

"No, something doesn't seem right. It doesn't seem to be a true earth immortal's power. Rather, he's borrowing external force to achieve this kind of pressure," the Freedom Path Master muttered to himself.

"Is there a difference?" the World School Master asked, rolling his eyes.

The Freedom Path Master thought to himself with a bitter smile.

*What you say is indeed the case... Whether he's a true earth immortal or half a step into that level, he still isn't someone we can go against.*

...

Qiu Honglei was facing the pressure head-on, so even breathing was becoming a bit difficult. Just then, however, a warm hand supported her, and she immediately felt the pressure on her entire body lessen.

*Ah Zu is really becoming more and more amazing. But this only makes me feel more pressure...*

As she looked at Zu An, her eyes were full of love.

Zu An looked at the surrounding soldiers. His gaze landed on Lu Sanyuan as he asked, "So is this where your confidence lies?"

Lu Sanyuan gave him a confused look and replied, "To be honest, the fact that you can still remain calm is quite surprising to me. Do you still think you are the sect master who receives a hundred answers to a single call? Within a hundred miles, all of the forces that were loyal to you have already been eliminated by me. You are all alone, so what do you have left to rely on?"

Zu An smiled. He held Qiu Honglei's hand and retorted, "Who said I was all alone? I still have her, don't I?"

Qiu Honglei's heart began to beat more quickly.

*Ah Zu, really... Even in front of so many people, he didn't forget to show me affection. I'm so embarrassed.*

*Most importantly, he looks like master right now. It feels so weird.*

Lu Sanyuan frowned as well. These two women claimed to be master and disciple, but why did they seem more like lovers? No wonder Qiu Honglei had never been interested in the men of the sect. So that was the reason!

However, he quickly snapped out of his daze and said, "Hmph. I'll give all of you one chance. Those who are willing to follow me, come and sit on this side. Those who wish to follow Yun Jianyue, move to the other side."

He swept his gaze across the crowd as he spoke. Wherever he looked, no one dared to make eye contact.

They sized both sides up and whispered among themselves. It was hard for them to make a decision. After all, Yun Jianyue's prestige had always been quite high. They had already called her sect master for so many years. Betraying her at this juncture felt rather unnatural.

Lu Sanyuan said coldly, "I will give you ten seconds to make your decision. Ten... nine... eight..."

The countdown seemed as if it were measuring their very lifespans. Immediately, many people quickly moved over to his side.

The current situation was already quite clear. Lu Sanyuan's prestige was already on the same level as Yun Jianyue's, and the former had come prepared. His people were all around them, and according to what he said, every faction within a hundred miles was now loyal to him. That meant victory was already assured.

With some taking the lead, others quickly moved behind Lu Sanyuan. At first, there was a huge crowd of people in the middle, but now, only a small portion of people were standing in place and hesitating.

Lu Sanyuan looked at the World School and Freedom Path Masters, asking, "Brothers Chen and Hua, what are you two planning to do?"

The World School Master said with a big smile, "I just want us to get along so we can all be rich, that's all." He moved over to Lu Sanyuan's side while speaking.

The Freedom Path Master's expression changed.

*Damn this Chen Taogong, he has no backbone! He actually sided with him so quickly! If we'd acted together, we might have even had a chance.*

He knew that the current situation was now already pretty much unchangeable. Even if he stood at Yun Jianyue's side, it wouldn't do much, and it would risk bringing the Freedom Path to ruin. Thus, he followed suit.

When he saw the two stand at his side, Lu Sanyuan smiled in satisfaction. Three of the four overlords were already at his side... Of course, the trash Fang Zhonghe was still plowing that tree.

"Master!" Li Feiqing cried out. He hadn't expected his master to also side with Lu Sanyuan.

The Freedom Path Master's expression remained calm as he said, "Feiqing, hurry and come over here."

Li Feiqing's breathing quickened. In the end, he still said gravely, "Master, your respected self taught me to grow out of the mud unsullied, that the Freedom Path's character is noble and clean. This disciple really does not wish to make your choice." After saying that, he stood on the other side.

Qiu Honglei's expression became a bit complicated. She said, "Brother Li, you actually don't need to do this..."

Li Feiqing shook his head and replied, "Saintess, this humble one isn't doing this for you, but for Sect Master Yun. I am not someone who goes against my master!"

"Idiot disciple!" The Freedom Path Master snapped as he looked at Lu Sanyuan with an awkward expression. "Lu Sanyuan, you know how children are; how about your respected self..."

"Young people will always do impractical things. They'll hit a wall and understand," Lu Sanyuan said, his expression indifferent.

The Freedom Path Master sighed in relief. Compared to his previous elegant self, he now looked as if he had aged another ten years.

Suddenly, the Secret Path Master Chi Fuzi walked to Yun Jianyue and said with a calm expression, "What Feiqing says is correct. This old one only knows Sect Master Yun as the leader of the Holy Sect. I will not do something as shameful as switching allegiances!"

Qiu Honglei was really moved, exclaiming, "Martial uncle!" She hadn't expected that Chi Fuzi, the overlord who was normally the least interested in worldly affairs, would actually choose to remain at her master's side.

Fatty Hu also laughed and said, "I'm not someone who asks for a lot anyway, and the Treasure Hunter Path is just me alone. Even if I rely on Sect Master Lu, there's no hope of prosperity, so I might as well follow Sect Master Yun and repay the favor she showed me in the past." He walked up to Zu An and cupped his hands, asking, "Sect Master Yun, your respected self won't look down on this Fatty Hu's cultivation being low and dragging you down, right?"

Zu An was stunned. He hadn't expected this carefree guy to actually have such a backbone, replying, "Of course not."

However, as soon as Fatty Hu stood behind Zu An, his expression immediately changed. He continued to mumble to himself, "I'm finished, I'm finished.... The Treasure Hunter Path's only child is also going to disappear... Sigh, why did you just have to act on impulse like that?"

Even so, with those people taking the lead, there were others who also stepped forward after some hesitation. There was no lack of hot-blooded men in the Devil Sect. They knew their choice would probably spell their end, but they all had their own beliefs.

However, the difference in strength between the two sides was still extremely large. Roughly twenty percent of the sect had gone over to Yun Jianyue's side, while Lu Sanyuan had eighty percent!

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## Chapter 2014: Crescent Ring

Lu Sanyuan was quite unhappy with the result. He had never expected there to still be twenty percent who were still willing to follow Yun Jianyue even in this kind of situation! He coldly said, "You're all following the path to your own doom!"

Zu An looked around him and said, "All of you are Holy Sect disciples. If conflict erupted due to personal interests, resulting in mutual destruction, that would only bring anguish to our own and satisfaction to our enemies. Lu Sanyuan, since you wish to become the new sect master, don't implicate others. How about we fight it out between just the two of us? The victor will take the crown."

Everyone loyal to the Devil Sect nodded, and even many people from Lu Sanyuan's eighty percent felt embarrassed.

*Sect Master Yun was still thinking about us in this kind of situation! This really makes us blush in shame...*

In reality, apart from a few stubborn people, most of them had only chosen to side with Lu Sanyuan because the situation called for it. They naturally didn't want to throw their lives away for nothing.

When he saw the others look at him expectantly, Lu Sanyuan wasn't shaken at all. "Martial sister Yun, at first, I thought that you were quite the impressive person, but now, it seems you aren't open and honest at all. You only have twenty percent on your side, while we have eighty percent, let alone the fact that my elite troops are still waiting outside. And yet, you're still asking for a fair fight with me in this kind of situation?"

He didn't feel like speaking any more to the other side for fear that she would say more things to sway his side's morale. As such, he waved his hand. The archers on the walls received his order and released their bowstrings. Arrows immediately showered down, instantly arriving in front of everyone on Yun Jianyue's side.

When they heard the terrifying sound of air being shattered, their expressions turned pale. These arrows were all supported by runes, making their power and armor-piercing abilities incredibly great. Even though they were all strong cultivators in the sect, and could last a wave or two against the terrifying arrow storm, they would still be doomed to die in the end.

While they were panicking, however, a faint yellow barrier appeared out of thin air and blocked all of the arrows. They were overjoyed at the unexpected good news! They all turned to Chi Fuzi, who was in the center of the group, and exclaimed, "The Secret Path Master is so amazing!"

A small formation disc appeared in Chi Fuzi's hands. He wiped at the cold sweat on his forehead while cursing, "Amazing my ass! I didn't bring enough of my treasures because I came to attend a wedding. This defense formation will hold up for another ten seconds at most. If you can't think of a solution in that time, we can only die together right here!"

As soon as he spoke, the air was filled with cracking sounds. The sect members were alarmed to discover that these armor-piercing arrows really lived up to their name. They didn't fall after hitting the barrier; instead, their runes continued to flicker, the arrows continuously spinning in place to make their way through.

If it had been just a few arrows, the Secret Path Master's defense formation would be enough to block them. But there were just too many! The huge rain of armor-piercing arrows were doing their best to pierce through, making the barrier flicker. Many parts were already covered with fine cracks; it was clearly about to break at any time.

The loyal sect members now realized what was happening as well. They all brought out their long-range attack methods. Streak after streak of light fired toward the archers on the courtyard walls.

Letting out muffled groans, many archers were knocked down. In response, the soldiers in the courtyard took out shields to block the long-range attacks. Some of Lu Sanyuan's trusted aides rushed over to help neutralize the attacks as well.

With them taking the lead, the others couldn't remain still anymore. They were worried that Lu Sanyuan would remember if they didn't do anything in this kind of situation. Lu Sanyuan's camp held the majority to begin with, and these people were all powerful members of the sect, so they easily dealt with the long-range attacks.

The archers' position stabilized, and they continued their coordinated attack on Yun Jianyue's group.

The formation disc in Chi Fuzi's hand audibly cracked, then fully ruptured, the defensive barrier also disappearing into specks of light. The people inside brandished their weapons at the incoming arrows, but there was already a hint of despair in their eyes. They knew fully well that just the eighty percent on Lu Sanyuan's side would be enough to wipe them out, let alone so many archers and Lu Sanyuan's elite armored troops.

Suddenly, the sound of a pipa filled the air. It was mournful at first, but then it became mellow and sweet. The murderous soldiers' expressions relaxed. They couldn't help but lower the bows in their hands. The other eighty percent of Devil Sect members stopped their attacks too. In an instant, the fighting came to a standstill.

Only some female members were confused. They quickly asked their companions, "What's going on?" However, they didn't receive any response, so they naturally didn't dare to leave their own ranks and continue attacking.

They followed the men's line of sight and saw a woman in a white dress. In her hand was a pipa that she played gently. She stood on a swaying branch and swayed with the wind, as if she were standing on a cloud. Her beautiful appearance and unique countenance were incredibly hard to describe in words.

In that instant, even the women had the same thought:

*Is this a goddess who descended from the heavens above?*

Qiu Honglei couldn't help but say through voice transmission, "Ah Zu, this Lady Daji really is too beautiful!" Even though this wasn't the first time she had seen Daji, it always left her with a deep sense of shock.

Zu An said with a smile, "You're also really beautiful, you know? I've discovered that almost every one of these young disciples at the Lake of Hatred is an admirer of yours."

In truth, he could have just used the Lion's Roar against these numbers, but he was currently dressed up as Yun Jianyue. The Lion's Roar really wasn't too elegant.

*If news got out that Yun Jianyue had forced back her enemies with the Lion's Roar, wouldn't big sis Yun chew me out to death after?*



“Hmph, I wouldn’t dare to claim that I could compare to Lady Daji. At the very least, I can’t disarm so many men,” Qiu Honglei said, her face red. If not for the fact that Zu An had already told her before, she really would find it hard to believe that a woman like this was just a summoned creature. She didn’t feel any envy, however. Instead, she was full of pity for Daji, because such a devastatingly beautiful woman had actually lost her soul.

Lu Sanyuan finally reacted and roared, “War drums, where are the war drums?!”

He naturally recognized that Daji was using an extremely profound mind-control method. Dealing with it was easy, however. Either one had to have cultivation as profound as hers, or one had to remove the pipa from her hand. Apart from that, battlefields were often filled with murderous shouts and the sound of military war drums being struck. With such things in place, music from a pipa often wouldn’t have as much of an effect, as it would just be overpowered.

However, even after he hollered for a long time, he realized that this wasn’t a battlefield, so he hadn’t prepared war drums or anything of that sort.

The Freedom Path and World School Masters exchanged a look. They saw the shock in each other's eyes. The skill seemed a bit similar to the Heavenly Devil School’s charm skills, but there seemed to be some kind of fundamental difference.

Lu Sanyuan couldn't wait any longer. He darted forward like an eagle hunting a rabbit. He instantly arrived in front of the white-clad woman. As long as he killed her, his subordinates would become clear-headed once more.

Daji’s Fox Charm skill was something that would make even enemies with higher cultivation be lenient toward her out of pity for her beauty. However, her opponent just happened to be the Unfeeling Path Master Lu Sanyuan, who focused on eliminating all feelings. There was no way he would have tender, protective feelings for the fairer sex.

Even so, he was a bit confused as well. Why wasn’t there even the slightest bit of fear in this woman’s eyes, with his vicious attack about to take her life? Not only was there no fear, he couldn't feel any emotions from her. It was almost as if she... as if she was just a puppet.

Suddenly, the white-clad woman vanished. In her place was Yun Jianyue.

Lu Sanyuan was shocked.

*How did she do that? Why did I not sense her movements at all?*

When he thought of that, he felt a bit of apprehension and quickly held back thirty percent of his power. Two palms collided, and his entire body trembled. Fortunately, he had prepared himself and used the chance to fly backward. After retreating a hundred meters, he stabilized in the air. He looked at the person on the tree in horror.

*Why is Yun Jianyue's cultivation even stronger than before?*

Meanwhile, Zu An was feeling a bit of a headache. He was currently using Yun Jianyue's identity and couldn't use many skills. If he used a move that was too fierce and killed this Lu guy, that would easily cause complications.

First, others would doubt his identity. After all, in the eyes of most people, Yun Jianyue and Lu Sanyuan were on the same level. Second, he was worried that Zhang Zitong wouldn't be able to find Yun Jianyue, and he had to get the information by interrogating Lu Sanyuan. That was why he didn't want to just kill him off.

...

In the eyes of everyone who was still clear-headed, they were all incredibly shocked.

They saw that 'Yun Jianyue' had used an unknown method to take the place of the white-clad woman. When she faced Lu Sanyuan's powerful attack, she merely casually raised a palm to send him flying.

*Could it be that there is already a qualitative difference between their cultivation?*

Zu An chuckled, remarking, "In the end, isn't it still just a fight between the two of us? Why did we have to go through all of that trouble before?"

Lu Sanyuan's expression was grave, but there was no fear. Instead, he surged with fighting intent. Judging from their earlier interaction, he predicted that her cultivation was only a bit higher than his own.

*She might have used some secret method to temporarily activate her potential and raise her cultivation. What is there to be scared of if it's something like that?*

"If it's to be a fight, then so be it! Let's see which one of us has the right to become the sect master!" he yelled. His long hair flew wildly, and black energy surrounded him. All of his muscles suddenly swelled, and he immediately became twice as big!

The strong feeling of pressure made even those who were befuddled by Daji gradually wake up. They wondered just what had happened, but their attention was immediately drawn to Lu Sanyun.

"What kind of situation is this? Why did Sect Master Lu use his Ruthless Tyrant Body?!"

Even the World School and Freedom Path Masters clicked their tongues, saying, "I didn't expect him to immediately use his most powerful skill! Sect Master Yun is now in a difficult spot."

Qiu Honglei quickly reminded Zu An, "Ah Zu, be careful! That's the Unfeeling Path's most powerful skill. It's rumored that Lu Sanyuan has already reached the unbreakable realm. Not only does every movement he makes carry the weight of a mountain behind it, his defenses are unmatched, making him impervious to swords and sabers."

"Where is your Crescent Ring? If you still don't bring it out, you might not have a chance to anymore. Or perhaps you can't use it to begin with?" Lu Sanyuan remarked; after entering this state, his mind had become especially clear. He felt that it was more and more unlikely for Yun Jianyue to be here.

Qiu Honglei looked at Zu An worriedly.

*There's definitely no issue with Ah Zu's cultivation, but even though he can have master's face, he can't imitate master's techniques or weapons!*

Zu An looked calm, however, and said, "I thought that I didn't need to use the Crescent Ring to defeat you, but since you brought it up, I guess I can give you what you want."

Qiu Honglei's eyes immediately widened, because she saw a curved moon appear at Zu An's side. It was identical to master's Crescent Ring!

*When did master give her weapon to him?*

However, she quickly realized something. She vaguely remembered that Ah Zu had a 'Rune Weapon Chart' skill that could imitate all kinds of weapons he had seen.

Lu Sanyuan didn't know about that. When he saw the weapon, he was a bit stunned.

*Could it actually be her?*

Suddenly, a crescent moon rose in front of him. The moonlight was beautiful and enchanting, yet incomparably dangerous.

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Chapter 2015: You Never Expected This, Right?

Lu Sanyuan felt a chill inside. He still carried quite a few reservations against Yun Jianyue's Crescent Ring. With a roar, his aura erupted powerfully. As he sent a fist crashing down on the Crescent Ring, he looked like a giant.

He, Lu Sanyuan, had already dominated the world of warriors with his strength for many years and never relied on any divine weapons to do so. What he had the most confidence in were none other than his own fists. In his opinion, all weapons were external things. They would never be as convenient to use as one's own body.

Even though he was an infamous rebel leader, so strictly speaking, he and Zhao Han were arch-enemies, that had been one way in which he actually admired Zhao Han; after all, Zhao Han hadn't used weapons either. He had only used his palms to make the entire world his.

In the time it took sparks to fly off a flint, his fist struck the side of the Crescent Ring. Whether in terms of power or angle, he expected it would be enough to send the weapon flying, thus making Yun Jianyue lose control of it. In his mind, he would use the instant when Yun Jianyue lost control of her weapon to rush forward and seize the initiative. Then, she wouldn't be able to reverse the situation anymore.

In just that moment, he had already thought of sixty different ways of winning. In the end, he chose the one with the greatest chance of victory. Even so, his expression immediately changed, because the Crescent Ring was actually smashed to pieces by his palm.

*How?!*

He knew just how powerful the Crescent Ring was, and hadn't expected to destroy it! That was why all of his plans had merely been to knock it away. But now, all of his strength ended up hitting empty air. In that instant, his arm almost dislocated, and the energies inside of him stirred chaotically. He almost spat out a mouthful of blood. He could no longer even think of his surefire plan of attack, so he quickly protected himself.

Lu Sanyuan was fully aware that he had fallen for his opponent's ploy, but he didn't know how she did it. Why had the Crescent Ring just suddenly disappeared?

How could he know that this Crescent Ring was something created by Zu An's Rune Weapon Chart? He could cancel its summoning at will.

At the same time, the Crescent Ring reappeared behind Lu Sanyuan's head. Endless moonlight crashed down on him, and it was impossible to avoid. His expression became ashen, but even though he was surprised, he wasn't overcome with alarm. His Ruthless Tyrant Body was the most powerful defense among the Holy Sect's three schools and six paths. This wasn't the first time he had faced Yun Jianyue's Crescent Ring, either. These attacks would at most injure him, but they wouldn't remove his ability to fight. Moreover, his Ruthless Tyrant Body allowed him to become stronger the more he was injured. As such, it wasn't even necessarily a bad thing.

He suddenly felt a chill run through his body.

*Why is the power of this Crescent Ring so much weaker than before?*

However, he didn't have time to think about it in detail. After all, the Crescent Ring had always moved strangely. Only when the attack really reached his body and he blocked it would he be able to seize back the initiative. That way, Yun Jianyue's fighting strength would be reduced by at least half.

He raised his hand and was about to grab toward the streak of moonlight when he was suddenly stunned.

*Where is my hand?*

*My right hand is gone? My left is... also gone?*

Only two bare arms remained in front of him.

At the same time, he felt as if his heel had just been lightly stepped on by someone. Then, he couldn't stand steadily anymore and fell straight to the ground. The sensation of pain rushed into his mind, and he reflexively screamed. Even with all of the unfeeling techniques he cultivated, he still couldn't help but roll on the ground in pain.

His arm tendons had been cut, as were his leg tendons. Even though he did get stronger the more injuries he had, his arms and legs were now crippled, so no matter how strong he was now, there was no way to use that strength. He couldn't just kill his opponent with words, right?

Lu Sanyuan was in endless pain, but in his mind, there were a million question marks.

*Why? Why was my Ruthless Tyrant Body so useless before her attacks?*

It wasn't just him. The eyes of everyone present were wide open. A second before, Lu Sanyuan had been releasing all of his power, and yet a second after, he had his arms and legs crippled? They had expected an extraordinary battle between dragons. With their cultivation, it wouldn't be as exaggerated as three days and three nights, but at the very least, it wasn't supposed to be decided in such a short instant, right? Many people had even felt a bit excited. A battle between people on this level was something that not everyone could witness, let alone this close up. It would be extremely beneficial for their future cultivation.

Even so, when they saw that the fight was over, they were all stunned.

*That's it?*

*We didn't see a damn thing before it ended!*

All of the higher-ups gave Yun Jianyue a confused look. They understood Lu Sanyuan's cultivation well. The power he displayed was far from what they could match, and yet he'd lost after a single exchange?

As for Lu Sanyuan's trusted aides, they all looked as if they were mourning their fathers' deaths.

*We're done for, it's all over...*

Those who had sided with Lu Sanyuan all had bitter looks on their faces.

*Would it be too late if we returned to Sect Master Yun's side now?*

"You're definitely not Yun Jianyue! Ahhh!" Lu Sanyuan screamed. Out of those present, only he knew fully well that if Yun Jianyue had such terrifying cultivation, he would have long since died. How could he even manage to force her into such a desperate situation? However, in the current situation, he only sounded as if he couldn't take a loss.

*We're already in this kind of situation, and yet he's still using such a lousy excuse to deny this loss. What, do you want all of us from the Holy Sect to help you fight against her just because you said so?*

*Even if we take a thousand steps back and she really isn't Sect Master Yun, do you think we're tired of living? Why would we go against someone like that who crippled you so easily?*

That was let alone the fact that this person looked just like Sect Master Yun! Furthermore, her Crescent Ring was also exactly the same, so how could it possibly be fake?

Zu An looked at Lu Sanyuan calmly. He also knew the importance of the current situation and didn't even bother to say anything.

When he saw the cold looks around him, Lu Sanyuan was full of despair. He clenched his teeth and hissed, "What are you still standing around for?"

Chi Fuzi, who was at Yun Jianyue's side, suddenly moved. He reached out his hand and grabbed Qiu Honglei's shoulder, saying, "I have the saintess on my side, so you..."

His expression changed midway through his sentence. A streak of purple light suddenly shot out from Qiu Honglei's body and blasted his hand away. In that instant, his hand became charred black, and the scent of burning flesh filled the air.

“Lightning Talisman!” Chi Fuzi exclaimed. He was a talisman master himself and immediately reacted to what was happening. At the same time, he was incredibly shocked. The quality of this talisman seemed to be even stronger than his own!

Meanwhile, Qiu Honglei had already appeared at Zu An’s side. She exclaimed, “Ah... Master, you really are supremely clever! There really was something wrong with him!”

Everyone around Chi Fuzi moved away and looked at him in horror. They really couldn't figure out why he would suddenly attack Qiu Honglei. Earlier, when there was a huge disparity between Sect Master Yun's side and Lu Sanyuan's side, this man had actually been willing to support Sect Master Yun. Why was it that now that the situation had been reversed, he'd attempted a betrayal?

Chi Fuzi didn't pay attention to anyone else; instead, he stared at Zu An and asked, “You noticed that there was something wrong with me from the very start?”

“That’s right. In the earlier situation, even the World School and Freedom Path Masters surrendered, and yet you stood at my side, seemingly duty-bound. It really didn’t make sense,” Zu An calmly replied.

The World School and Freedom Path Masters felt their faces heat up. It seemed their behavior hadn't escaped the sect master's notice.

“Weren't there still so many others who chose to stand by you?” Chi Fuzi asked, finding a bit hard to understand.

“Those people are different from you; they're still young and have a bit of hot-bloodedness in them. However, you're a path master, someone whose every move controls the prosperity and decline of one of the paths. Even if you truly chose to follow me, there's no way you would risk the safety of your entire faction,” Zu An replied as he patted Qiu Honglei's shoulder and helped her sort out her wrinkled clothes.

“That’s the only reason?” Chi Fuzi exclaimed, looking at 'Yun Jianyue' as if she were some kind of freak

*She was actually someone so distrustful!*



"Of course not," Zu An replied with a chuckle. "Did you forget what you said when the armor-piercing arrows came? You said that you were here for a wedding, and that was why you didn't bring many treasures and materials, so you couldn't maintain the barrier for long. But as a cultivator, who wouldn't bring their treasures with them everywhere they went, especially in a place like the Holy Sect where the strong prey on the weak?"

Li Feiqing, Fatty Hu, and the other disciples of the sect all nodded. They were full of admiration.

*The sect master is the sect master after all; she immediately saw through that old fart's mistake. We were even almost moved to tears by his actions.*

"That's right. It seems you actually understand me quite well. However, did you predict that I had already made my preparations from the very start?" Chi Fuzi exclaimed.

As soon as he spoke, a formation disc appeared in his hands and activated. Then, the entirety of the Yin Yang Path's territory was enveloped within a golden barrier. The ceiling of the golden barrier had a sun, moon, and stars, but the stars didn't look small and beautiful, and were instead incredibly large and ominous. Everyone inside felt as if they were facing terrifying beasts.

Chi Fuzi carried Lu Sanyuan out of the formation and roared with laughter. "This old one already set up this Falling Star Formation here. No matter how high your cultivation is, you will still be smashed to dust by the meteors!"

"You've actually successfully built the legendary Falling Star Formation?!" the Freedom Path and World School Masters exclaimed in horror.

Even though the younger disciples weren't aware, how could those with their statuses not know about the Secret Path's forbidden formations? It was rumored that in ancient times, there was someone who had used this formation to trap an army of deities and devils. Then, those countless powerful beings were blasted to ashes inside the formation.

The two of them could no longer remain calm. They rushed forth and used all of their ultimate skills. Unfortunately, no matter what they used, the barrier of light around them didn't move at all. The only thing it did was make Chi Fuzi smirk.

Qiu Honglei couldn't help but ask, "Martial Uncle Chi Fuzi, why did you betray master for Lu Sanyuan? Master has treated you extremely well, and the Secret Path received the resources and status you asked for. Is that Lu bastard going to give you more?"

"I made this choice for many reasons. It is not something that I can express succinctly," Chi Fuzi said; he clearly didn't wish to respond to the question. He looked at Zu An and remarked, "You never expected this, right? You could predict a momentary choice of mine, but can you predict something from half a month ago?"

"Indeed, I couldn't predict things that far back, but there's no need for that anyway," Zu An said. While he spoke, a formation disc appeared in his hand as well. He took out some small flags, then placed them in various places. The pressure coming from the stars above gradually faded, and the entire golden barrier vanished.

"How?!" Chi Fuzi exclaimed as his eyes widened. His greatest work had been ruined just like that?

Zu An chuckled and said, "When I entered, I noticed that there seemed to be a formation here, so I tampered with it a bit."

Even someone as powerful as Zhao Han had ended up falling into the trap of a formation's ambush, so he was especially careful regarding these things. Furthermore, after he had studied the Baopu Sutra, as long as he was on guard, it was practically impossible for others to scheme against him using these methods.

Chi Fuzi stared at him and exclaimed, "You are a formation master? There is no way Sect Master Yun would know about these things. Just who are you? Could it be that you are the Royal Academy's Yan Xiang?"

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Chapter 2016: There Is No Way You Are Stronger Than the One From the Capital

Qiu Honglei held onto Zu An's arm with a sweet smile as she retorted, "Martial uncle Chi Fuzi, did you lose your head after your defeat? My master is such an incredible beauty, so how could she be that old fart, Yan Xiang?"

When he heard her praise his beauty, Zu An felt a chill, but he couldn't argue against it and could only remain silent.

The others around him all roared with laughter. They all ridiculed Chi Fuzi and Lu Sanyuan for being sore losers. This person in front of them was Sect Master Yun! Why would those two think that she was Yan Xiang? Were they blind?

There were a few higher-level members who were confused, however. There was no way Lu Sanyuan and Chi Fuzi would say such a thing as a joke. Furthermore, this Sect Master Yun was a bit strange in certain ways. At the very least, the Sect Master Yun they knew couldn't win against Lu Sanyuan so easily. However, whether it was this person's appearance or weapons, they were identical to Sect Master Yun, so those people really couldn't imagine how someone else could impersonate her so well. They could only attribute it to a recent breakthrough Sect Master Yun had made in secluded cultivation.

Chi Fuzi said seriously, "I did indeed underestimate you. But do you really think you have already won?"

At that moment, a formation disc appeared in his hand. Light flickered nearby, and he and Lu Sanyuan vanished.

"That's the Secret Path's Astrological Vanishing Technique!" There was someone who recognized what had happened. This kind of skill often had a predetermined safe location. If it was activated, the user could immediately move to that location, making it an exceptional protective measure. How could the user's opponent possibly find them in a short amount of time?

Many people sighed. The Secret Path really had endless methods, and they were all really hard to defend against. Forget about Sect Master Yun and the saintess, not even they could keep up if they were schemed against by a dangerous enemy like this.

However, a water-like ripple appeared in the sky. Immediately after, two figures dropped from above. They were none other than Chi Fuzi and Lu Sanyuan!

Chi Fuzi was laughing heartily as he said, "I was just laughing at Yun Jianyue's slow wits. She clearly had the advantage, and yet she still wasted so much time speaking and gave me the chance to activate this formation. If she had attacked us immediately, how could we..."

Midway through his sentence, he saw Lu Sanyuan's horrified expression, and he also realized that something wasn't right. He looked around him, and his face paled. He murmured, "How? How are we still here..."

Even the World School and Freedom Path Masters were stunned.

*What in the world is Chi Fuzi doing? I don't recall him being someone who made these kinds of jokes!*

Zu An smiled and remarked, "You never expected this, did you? I took the liberty of locking down this space when I took down your formation earlier."

He was trying to save Yun Jianyue, so he had to make sure to do everything thoroughly. But of course, this was still a lesson he had learned from Violet Mountain. That was the best example of how a group of the world's most powerful beings had used formations to scheme against the strongest being of this world.

Chi Fuzi's face was swollen like an eggplant. He had never expected that his words would be thrown right back at him so quickly. It really was harsh to the ears.

He took out his formation disc and was about to bring out another one of the formations he was proud of when he suddenly heard a sigh next to his ear, and a voice saying, "Do you really think I'd give you another chance?"

He was horrified to discover that Yun Jianyue was already next to him, thrusting a finger at him. Even though he could clearly see that finger move toward him slowly, why couldn't he avoid it?

After being hit by the finger, all of his ki was sealed. He didn't have any ability to retaliate anymore.

However, Zu An didn't smile, and backed up with a grave expression. A moment later, a streak of bloody light appeared where he had just been. In that instant, space itself split apart, and an endless void appeared. If one were hit by this kind of power, one would be seriously injured, if not dead.

"Are you okay?" Qiu Honglei asked as she quickly arrived at Zu An's side. She examined his body with a worried look.

Zu An shook his head and turned to look at the opposing side with a grave expression.

Gasps filled the air from all around. Before the onlookers' eyes, an extremely strange scene appeared in front of them. Lu Sanyuan, who had lost the ability to move, stood back up again. Lumps of flesh surged wildly from where his hands had been were cut off, and they regrew rapidly at a visible rate.

Everyone watching felt their scalps turn numb. All high-level cultivators had the ability to regenerate, but the rate at which they did so was based on the severity of their wounds. Such injuries would frequently take several months to years to fully heal from. Regeneration at this kind of speed was unheard of. It looked disgusting and terrifying.

"What kind of situation is this? What are you? Get off me, ahhh!" Lu Sanyuan screamed bitterly.

He was the master of the Unfeeling Path, which cared about severing one's emotions. He rarely showed any strong emotions. Even so, right now, everyone present could see just how scared he was.

"Kek kek kek... Don't refuse me. I can help you experience what it's like to be a higher level lifeform!" a sinister voice that carried an ear-piercing vibration said, emerging from his mouth. It didn't seem like the voice of a human, and sounded more like a group of strange bugs.

"No, you cannot treat me like this! We are allies; you cannot go against our previous agreement!" Lu Sanyuan cried as his face distorted in pain.

"It was you who failed to complete our agreement first. Trash like you already no longer has the qualification to become my ally," the buzzing voice said from his mouth again.

All of the Devil Sect members shivered when they heard these two entirely different voices come from a single person's mouth. They all withdrew into the distance and watched Lu Sanyuan vigilantly.

Qiu Honglei was also a bit scared. She wasn't scared of a fight, but she was scared of this kind of strange and unknown thing.

Zu An's eyes narrowed.

*Could it be...*

Lu Sanyuan seemed to have understood his own fate. He asked in despair, "How did you enter my body? I clearly didn't eat the pill you gave me!" A proud warrior like him would never trust another easily. Even now, he didn't know how he had fallen for the other side's tricks.

The buzzing voice snickered. "Did you think we messed with the pills we gave you? Stupid human, how could your pitiful intelligence understand our plans? We put our special measures in the treasures we gave you. You lusted after the strength they brought you, so of course you wouldn't leave them unused. As long as you kept them on you, we would have a chance to take over your body. Of course, if you hadn't suffered such a crushing defeat to the point that even your hands were chopped off, it might not have been so easy for me to enter your body."

All of Lu Sanyuan's muscles began to squirm, as if something was transforming and modifying his body. His face swelled up, and layers of black and white patterns appeared. As time went on, he stopped looking like a human.

He turned to Zu An and said, "Senior sister, in the past, when my master was attacked by your master, the position of sect master was also stolen. All this time, I vowed to get revenge. I never expected that everything I did would only be to help this thing. Hurry and kill me, it... hurts! Aaaahhhh!"

What followed was a heart-rending scream. Pitch-black, bony spikes grew out of his arms and legs. His back split open, producing a set of carapace-like armor. The flesh under the armor continued to squirm, and several nodes of flesh began to sprout. They grew at a rapid pace, creating wings that were as thin as a cicada's. His original face was nowhere to be seen, now replaced by the head of a monster. A pair of giant mandibles emerged from his jaw. A cold glint flickered from them, as if they were a pair of reaper's scythes.

"What kind of monster is this?!" people exclaimed.

Even though the Devil Sect engaged in their fair share of killing and slaughter, even hunting countless beasts, they had never seen something like this before. That was especially true when their usually awe-inspiring Vice Sect Master had become a giant bug-like creature. It really was horrifying to watch.

"It was those monsters after all!" Zu An exclaimed, his expression turning ice-cold. He'd already had his suspicions. Apart from those monsters, who else had the ability to do something like this?

Unfortunately, the court could guard against a thousand things, but not an attack from the Devil Sect's side.

Chi Fuzi, who was the closest to Lu Sanyuan, finally reacted. He reflexively tried to run, but the space around him was restricted. His speed wasn't his strong suit either. As soon as he took a step, the giant demonic bug caught up to him. Its sickle-like mandibles clamped together, and Chi Fuzi screamed miserably. His body was bisected at the waist.

When they saw that, the World School and Freedom Path Masters immediately backed up. Even though Chi Fuzi's strength lay in his formations and his body was weaker, he was still one of the overlords and wasn't that weak. However, the opponent instantly slashed him in half...

At that moment, Chi Fuzi's upper half was still conscious. He instinctively crawled into the distance, his face full of fear. He pleaded, "Save me... Save..."

A second later, the giant bug's chest suddenly ruptured open. The ribs that had once been inside had turned into rows of sharp teeth. Chi Fuzi's body was swallowed up in a single gulp.

The onlookers were speechless.

*Aren't its jaws part of its head? Why is its chest also a mouth?*

However, how could they still focus on with something like that? They all ran for their lives to get as far away from the monster as possible.

The demonic bug fluttered its wings, creating waves of earsplitting noises. Many of the troops who were farthest away clutched their heads in pain. Then, bony outgrowths appeared from their shoulders and limbs as well. They began to transform into bugs rapidly. Their resistance wasn't as strong as Lu Sanyuan's, so they instantly became demonic bugs. They looked almost identical to the first one, with the only difference being that they were much smaller.

The sect members who had started running away just happened to run into them. The bugs opened their mouths, firing blasts of acidic fluid.

“Ahhh!”

Miserable screams filled the air one after another. The ones running at the forefront were caught off guard and hit. Then, they melted on the spot, becoming viscous blue puddles. Immediately after, the bugs launched a ruthless assault. Many sect members quickly lost their lives.

The ones present were almost all Devil Sect elites. If had they faced the enemy in a proper frontal assault, they wouldn't have suffered such severe casualties. But when they saw Lu Sanyuan turn into a demonic bug, and saw the Secret Path Master being killed instantly, they had all lost their courage. How could they still mount a decent resistance?

Even though there were still people like Li Feiqing and Fatty Hu, who had tougher mentalities and called for their companions to fight back, their side was already in complete disarray. They couldn't face these demonic bugs who were unified in will at all.

Suddenly, there was a trace of silver moonlight that surrounded the whole place. The survivors saw a beautiful crescent moon.

A second later, the demonic bugs all stopped moving. Immediately after, their upper halves slid cleanly off their lower halves, bisected from a single thin slice.

In that instant, apart from the biggest demonic bug, all of the little demonic bugs were killed instantly!

“Long live Sect Master Yun!” The survivors were stunned at first, and then they cheered excitedly. Even those who had been on Lu Sanyuan's side were hollering sincerely.

Zu An coldly scanned the surroundings and said, “Hua Feihua, Chen Taogong, lead the others and keep your disciples in order. Don't let the previous chaos happen again.”

“Understood!” The two reflexively bowed in respect, but then they were stunned. Why did it feel so natural to listen to her? Still, since the other side



didn't seem to want to look into what had just happened, then that was their greatest blessing.

The giant bug stared at Zu An and said, "Human, you are quite strong, but no matter how strong you are, there is no way you are stronger than the one from the capital. You are doomed to become nutrients that nourish me."

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Chapter 2017: You Are That Person!

Zu An's expression was a bit strange as he murmured, "The one in the capital..."

*This bug isn't talking about me, is it?*

*But I've never seen it before!*

The demonic bug buzzed, "Hmph, that War Priest just couldn't hold himself back and showed himself near the capital, but he ended up being killed by a powerful native. Then, the human country started to become wary, and is now on guard against us invaders. Now, we can only operate in secret.

"I didn't actually want to show myself that quickly for fear of drawing that murderous demon over, but who would have thought that Lu Sanyuan and Chi Fuzi would be such trash, unable to even handle such an easy matter? I had no choice but to make an appearance."

Qiu Honglei gave Zu An a look. She smiled and asked the demonic bug, "Are you not scared of that murderous demon?"

"Hmph, that person is far away at the capital, so how could he know about what is happening here? As for news leaking out..." The demonic bug smiled sinisterly as it said, "It's also simple enough. I just need to kill everyone here and evolve them into demonic bugs. There won't be any chance of anyone leaking our secrets anymore hen."

When they heard it speak so casually, as if killing everyone was an extremely simple matter, the survivors felt their scalps go numb.

The members of the Devil Sect were actually quite the bold and tough sort. After all, those who could survive in the Devil Sect and even make it to their general headquarters were definitely not good and noble. Even so, this demonic bug in front of them really surpassed their imaginations. It was as if they were facing their natural predator, leaving them so scared that they couldn't even produce thoughts of fighting back.

“From the looks of it, it seems you have many others similar to you who have infiltrated this world, right?” Zu An asked, wanting to use the chance to get more intelligence.

However, the demonic bug grew vigilant and retorted, “Are you stalling for time? You’ll naturally find out once I evolve all of you into demonic bugs.”

Zu An thought of something. This was already the second time the bug had mentioned 'evolution'. What did that really mean?

Just then, buzzing filled the air, and two flesh spheres suddenly appeared from the giant bug's abdomen. They floated behind it and quickly swelled up. Immediately after, they turned into two bugs identical to itself! Of course, they were a bit smaller. And yet, when compared to the ones transformed from the earlier soldiers, they were much larger.

The demonic bug to the right moved its head a bit. It spoke in a strange voice, wondering, “Is this what it's like to be a higher-level lifeform? As expected, the feeling is much better, hahaha...”

Those present were horrified when they heard the voice, because even though it was a bit distorted, they could still vaguely recognize that it was Chi Fuzi's. If this was Chi Fuzi, then the other one had to be...

The demonic bug to the left moved its limbs a bit. After a long sigh, it said, “So it turns out I was just a frog at the bottom of a well before. The feeling of demonic transformation really is wonderful. Everyone, do not refuse it any longer and welcome a new form of life along with the rest of us.”

He called out to his soldiers and subordinates, but those people all stayed far away.

*Are you kidding? Why would we stop living as wonderful humans and become this kind of damned thing?!*

Zu An frowned slightly. So it turned out this was what the monster meant by evolution. The people it ate would then transform into more of its own species. If so... As long as it was given enough time, wouldn't it be able to turn the entire world into demonic bugs? In battle, this kind of creature wasn't necessarily as strong as the War Priest was, but the threat it posed to the world was something that not even ten War Priests could compare to.

By then, the demonic bugs who had once been Chi Fuzi and Lu Sanyuan trembled strangely. Then, they both spat out an egg. After that, two more demonic bugs appeared in the air, a bit smaller than themselves.

Zu An thought to himself that if they became smaller and smaller, that would make things easier. However, as soon as that thought appeared in his mind, the two new demonic bugs trembled. They both spat out two demonic bugs that were exactly the same.

Zu An was speechless.

*Why aren't these things following the law of conservation of energy?! Doesn't this mean they'll just divide endlessly?*

The smaller demonic bugs moved. They immediately sprayed mouthfuls of green mist at the survivors.

Zu An waved his hand to dispel the mist sprayed at him. At the same time, he warned the people present loudly, "Everyone, be careful not to take in any of this mist. They might be using spores to infect you with parasites."

Everyone at the Devil Sect General Headquarters was an elite. Many people had already activated their respective defensive abilities. Even so, who would have thought that the demonic bug corpses that had been killed would suddenly explode? Blasts of green mist filled the air.

They had all fled in alarm, but they hadn't expected that even these bug corpses would do such a thing! There were many unfortunate souls who were a bit slower than the others and took in a bit of the green mist. Then, their faces turned green, and they frantically grabbed at their faces and throats. In just a few seconds, bony outgrowths emerged from their backs and limbs. They were just like Lu Sanyuan's soldiers, undergoing demonic bug transformation.

Zu An observed the process carefully. These bugs were even smaller than the other ones. It seemed they were the lowest level demonic bugs. Evidently, only the higher-level demonic bugs had the ability to divide.

He suddenly heard Mi Li's anxious voice in his head, saying, "These are Demonic Motherbugs. They can devour all living creatures and transform them into demonic bugs. If they're not restrained, their reproductive abilities can easily occupy an entire world."

"Are there any limits to their reproduction?" Zu An asked, pleasantly surprised at her sudden awakening. Ever since she had recovered some of her memories, her soul had clearly already healed, and yet she was still always sleeping. She seemed to be preparing and accumulating something.

"There is no limit!" Mi Li replied, her voice full of apprehension. "Additionally, you must eliminate their posterity as quickly as possible. You can't let them accumulate enough energy. The Demonic Motherbugs can continue to evolve crazily, becoming many, many times stronger than how they are right now."

"How much stronger is 'many, many times'?" Zu An asked.

"Using the classification system of this world, they can instantly kill an earth immortal," Mi Li replied.

Zu An was speechless.

"Why are you still not doing anything?" Mi Li asked in confusion when she saw that he still remained calm.

"I want to test it and see just how strong it is after it goes berserk. Only then will I have enough information if I encounter a Demonic Motherbug in a different world," Zu An said. He knew that the Demonic Motherbug was actually being restrained by the natural protection of this world and didn't have its original strength. However, who knew how much longer that natural protection would last for? Besides that, he had a premonition that in the future, he would probably have to face its perfect form. He had to use this chance to understand it more.

"You're playing with fire!" Mi Li replied. She knew what he was thinking, but she still couldn't help but feel worried.

“You also know that this is the most rational choice,” Zu An said with a chuckle. The Tai’e Sword appeared out of thin air. Despite what he'd just said, he still didn’t dare to be careless in the slightest.

“If you die, everything will be over,” Mi Li said quietly.

“I won’t die,” Zu An replied calmly.

Of course, he wouldn’t just sit still as the demonic bugs infected all living people. The Crescent Ring quickly moved, drawing out a perfect arc. All of the smallest demonic bugs were killed one by one. Whenever he killed them, a flame passed over the bugs and burned them away until not a trace remained, to prevent their corpses from releasing more spores.

Many people in the sect carried some apprehension.

*When did the sect master learn fire element skills? Also, it doesn’t seem like ordinary fire...*

However, they were even more grateful. With that help, they finally stabilized their mental states. They attacked to wipe out all of the lowest-level demonic bugs that still remained.

The original Demonic Motherbug stared at Zu An, saying, “You are even stronger than I imagined. What a pity, however, that it is all useless.”

After that, its wings released a wave of ear-splitting buzzing. The other demonic bugs also shook their wings in response, filling the air with a strange noise.

Everyone present clutched their heads in pain, but this sound seemed to directly target the soul. No matter how they covered their ears, the noise still entered their heads.

Just then, a giant golden bell appeared in the sky.

*Riiiiiiing!*

A heavy bell toll echoed through the air. Countless sound waves spread out and scattered the sharp and ear-splitting bug vibrations.

“This seems to be Tranquility Temple’s Tranquility Bell...” the Freedom Path Master said, feeling a bit absent-minded.

The World School Master looked around, wondering, "Could it be that Tranquility Temple's balding donkeys came here? But how is that possible?!"

Unfortunately, they didn't see a trace of a Tranquility Temple disciple anywhere.

This was naturally not the real Tranquility Bell, but rather something Zu An had created through his Rune Weapon Chart. He had witnessed the power of the bell before at Violet Mountain and knew that it was a perfect counter to these demonic bugs' sound attack.

"Hm? You seem to have quite a few tricks up your sleeve," the Demonic Motherbug said, clearly recognizing that this was his work. It finally felt that something was wrong, saying, "Hmph, I won't be giving you any more chances."

It raised its head, and all of its wings spread out. Its body doubled in size. Then, the remaining big demonic bugs, including Chi Fuzi and Lu Sanyuan, turned into streaks of green light that were instantly absorbed into its body. In this instant, it was as if the entire world were covered in a layer of green. The next second, it vanished.

Zu An's expression changed. He picked up Qiu Honglei and instantly moved a hundred meters backward. At almost the same instant, a pair of sharp teeth appeared from the space he had just been standing in; they belonged to the giant mouth in the Demonic Motherbug's chest! Everything within a range of thirty or so meters from it was corroded by a mysterious power. Only a huge crater remained in the era. It went without saying what would have happened had they not dodged in time.

The Demonic Motherbug was a bit surprised. It clearly hadn't expected him to be able to avoid such a surefire attack. Even so, it didn't hesitate. With a shake of its wings, it instantly turned into a streak of lightning and attacked Zu An again.

Due to its speed, it was as if countless demonic bugs had appeared in the air, all attacking the target at the very center. Under those attacks, even the beautiful crescent ring turned dim. The next moment, it actually shattered under the powerful onslaught.

When they saw that scene, the Devil Sect's disciples all felt their hearts shatter along with it.

*Even Sect Master Yun's weapon was destroyed... It seems that it's all over now.*

The next instant, a bell tolled quickly. A translucent outline of a giant golden bell seemed to surround Zu An's body. However, as the endless demonic bugs crashed into it, cracks appeared one after another across its surface; it clearly couldn't stop this murderous barrage of attacks.

Suddenly, Zu An sighed and said, "I already know the limits of this berserk form of yours."

After saying that, he drew the Tai'e Sword. A dazzling streak of sword radiance illuminated the world, and the green space was sliced apart from within.

The Demonic Motherbug screamed in horror, exclaiming, "You... You are that person!"

It tried to flee, but how could it move more quickly than the sword radiance? Soon after, its body was penetrated by a beam of light. Then, its body was obliterated by the destruction of endless sword ki, completely vanishing from this world.

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Chapter 2018: Unexpected Gains

This entire place was completely quiet, as if the people within didn't dare to believe that the terrifying bug had died just like that. Only when the gloomy green sky split open and sunlight scattered across the world again, bathing them in its warmth, did they all erupt into roaring cheers.

"Sect Master Yun's cultivation is incredible! Unmatched under the heavens!"

"Long live Sect Master Yun; she will unify the world!"

"Sect Master Yun is a master of arts and war! Her virtue is a blessing for all people!"

...

They were all speaking praise of the utmost sincerity, even though they had been hostile against each other not too long ago. Against the terrifying demonic bugs from a different world, humans would reflexively unite under one camp. What meaning did their usual hatred and enmity still have?

When he heard the endless praise, Zu An couldn't help but chuckle.

*These Devil Sect people are quite the talents indeed. They speak so well; I love it here.*

After taking the risk of letting the Demonic Motherbug enter its berserk mode, not only had he learned about some of its special skills, he had also obtained some more concrete data.

Strictly speaking, the Demonic Motherbug wasn't as strong in a fight as the War Priest, but as it carried out its reproductive process, its power seemed to grow rapidly as well. For example, its final attack was something not even the Tranquility Bell could stop. Just then, its strength had increased five-fold. If it had continued to reproduce a few more generations, Zu An wouldn't necessarily have been able to stop it. Even so, he wondered if its reproduction had an upper limit, or if there was some cooldown restriction between each cycle.

He felt waves of warmth rush into his meridians. He could feel that he had become even stronger. He knew that was the result of the Heaven Devouring Sutra and the Kun Peng's absorption powers. He had just slain the Demonic Motherbug and many generations of its progeny, including such strong individuals as Lu Sanyuan and Chi Fuzi. He had killed them all at once, so he'd absorbed practically all of their cultivation.

He checked the system's experience bar and saw that he had just about reached the end of the 75th level. He couldn't help but feel a bit confused. According to the previous growth speed, he should already have been at the 76th level. Why was he only at the peak of the 75th level?

He suddenly realized something. Even if he killed more enemies and absorbed their cultivation, he likely wouldn't be able to reach level 76. That was probably a limitation of this world. After all, according to the information he had received from the secret dungeons, the strength of a world's origins largely affected what level a cultivator could reach. It seemed that compared to the daoists' secret dungeon and the Fiend races' Xia Dynasty secret dungeon, this world's origin was a bit weaker.



*No wonder Zhao Han wasn't able to break through the earth immortal rank even after so many years.*

*It seems I can only make my breakthrough in a more powerful world.*

He suddenly remembered something. He moved over to the place where the Demonic Motherbug had been killed and picked up a sphere the size of a ping-pong ball; its surface was uneven and bumpy like a tumor. He had seen the item drop from the Demonic Motherbug's body. Previously, he had been worried that the Demonic Motherbug's infectious properties were too strong and that leaving it behind could make more ordinary humans undergo demonification. That was why he hadn't dared keep it alive just to question it, and had instantly ended its life with a single attack. And yet, beven though the Demonic Motherbug's body was already blown to ashes by that destructive power, this thing was still safe and sound. It was definitely a special item.

Mi Li cried excitedly, "That's a Motherbug Core!"

"Is it that precious?" Zu An asked, stunned when he heard the excitement in her voice.

"Of course it's precious! A thousand Demonic Motherbugs wouldn't necessarily condense a single core. You can think of it as something like the essence of a deity, or a bloodline aptitude. Seeing as that Demonic Motherbug was able to produce this item, if it had been allowed to grow, it would have been able to evolve into a Motherbug Empress and become the ruler of the bug race. Only, who would have thought that it would die to you?"

"This thing is only useful for the bug race?" Zu An asked, feeling a bit of a headache. There was no way he would become a bug, let alone become some bug emperor. Furthermore, those demonic bugs didn't seem like the type one could raise as a pet. So, in his hands, wasn't such a precious item trash.

"It's not useless." Mi Li thought for a moment before saying, "I've heard that, just as the demonic bugs use their posterity to increase their own strength, they can become stronger through killing enemies. But if you use it for that effect, the Motherbug Core will shatter and disappear like a consumable. It won't be as useful as it is for the demonic bugs."

"That's not useless at all!" Zu An clicked his tongue. "You can increase your strength just by killing your enemies? Then I can just keep charging up until I

become thousands to tens of thousands of times stronger. Wouldn't I be undefeatable then? Even if I encounter someone far stronger, I can just kill them instantly, right?"

"Keep dreaming." Mi Li rolled her eyes and said, "Your strength won't increase just because you kill any random enemy. You must kill enemies stronger than yourself to successfully stack your strength."

Zu An was speechless. He replied, "Isn't that a bit too strict of a condition? It's already quite amazing to be able to keep your life if you face someone stronger than yourself, let alone killing them."

"Of course it's difficult for an ordinary person, but for the truly strong, they don't fear a large disparity in strength. They're always able to find a way to overcome the challenge," Mi Li explained. "For example, the War Priest you killed, and even that Demonic Motherbug? Both of them were actually stronger than you. However, because of the world's natural protection, they couldn't fight against you in their complete forms. That's why you were able to kill these powerful beings." She added with a chuckle, "Besides, which one of your opponents in the past few years wasn't stronger than you?"

Zu An was stunned.

*I think you're right... I've constantly been fighting against all kinds of strong beings. It's just like those characters on the internet. What kind of protagonist would you be if you couldn't beat opponents stronger than you?*

Even so, the only problem was that he was now too strong. Finding enemies stronger than himself in this world wouldn't be as easy as before. He stored the Motherbug Core away, and couldn't help but say with a sigh, "The reproduction of these bug species doesn't seem to be in line with the law of conservation of energy at all..."

Normally, reproduction needed energy from the mother, which was why the more one reproduced, the weaker the mother's body would become. However, these demonic bugs actually did the exact opposite! The more they reproduced, the stronger they became.

"Conservation of energy?" Mi Li repeated, then thought to herself for a bit. "The name sounds like a theory from a world of science. However, the universe is vast. There are too many things that can't be explained by a scientific civilization."

Zu An nodded. There were indeed many things in the world of cultivation he was in right now that couldn't be explained through science. Of course, it could just be because of principles that science hadn't fully understood yet. If those were to be understood, perhaps the language of science would then be able to explain such phenomena.

...

Meanwhile, the World School and Freedom Path Masters both came to greet him respectfully. Mi Li yawned and said, "How boring. I'm going back to sleep." That was the last thing she said.

Zu An was full of regrets. He and Mi Li had only spent a small amount of time together. She seemed almost as if she was trying to avoid detection by certain beings, as well as storing power. Unfortunately, she couldn't tell him any details at the moment.

"Master~" Qiu Honglei said, although she quietly tugged on his sleeves to remind him that the members of the sect were still bowing.

Zu An snapped out of his daze. Seeing so many people trembling while kneeling on the ground, he knew that they were scared that he would now settle the matter of betrayal. Because of the previous battle, the prestige of 'Yun Jianyue' was at an all time high. Not a single person here had any thoughts of resistance.

"Honglei, I'll leave this matter to you," Zu An said. He wasn't familiar with the internal affairs of the Devil Sect and didn't know many of them. It would be easy for him to be exposed. He had finally won back prestige for big sis Yu, so wasting it now would be a huge waste. Furthermore, he still had more important affairs to take care of - specifically, rescuing the real Yun Jianyue.

"Yes, master!" Qiu Honglei replied. She wanted to go with him, but she knew that someone had to stay behind to clean up the aftermath.

Soon after, orders for rewards and penalties were issued. The ones who had remained loyal to her and her master had to be greatly promoted. The betrayers were punished, but the punishments were all within acceptable levels, so they all accepted the decision wholeheartedly. On top of that, after such a huge disaster, higher-level figures such as Lu Sanyuan and Chi Fuzi had died. Even Fang Long, who initially escaped the disaster, had ended up

being killed by the demonic bugs just like his father. There were too many positions left open, leaving many people enthusiastically competing for them.

All of them were full of admiration toward Qiu Honglei's fair judgment, thinking that the saintess really was like a goddess!

*She will definitely be the next sect master. How could someone like that be someone a toad like Fang Long could contaminate?*

...

After Zu An left the Yin Yang Path's territory, he quickly returned to his original appearance. He removed the two large pears and tossed them away; he instantly felt much more refreshed.

His divine sense covered the entire Lake of Hatred and he quickly located Zhang Zitong. After thinking about it, he took out his Embroidered Envoy mask, then quickly arrived near her. She was staying in a remote and secluded residence that looked worn-out and old. It seemed to have already been abandoned for a long time.

When she saw his arrival, Zhang Zitong jumped down from a nearby tree, her expression full of pleasant surprise. However, when she saw his getup, she was a bit confused. She exclaimed, "Sir, you're finally here! Hm? Do you not need to pretend to be that person anymore?"

Zu An said, "There's no need anymore."

Zhang Zitong was about to say something, but stopped.

*He's moving around as he pleases in his Embroidered Envoy getup in the Devil Sect General Headquarters! Sir really is too overconfident... If the Devil Sect finds out, the two of us might not be able to run away anymore.*

"Something seemed to have happened in the Yin Yang Path's territory earlier. There seemed to be a huge battle, and I was worried that sir had been trapped over there. However, I didn't dare to go against sir's orders to leave this place," Zhang Zitong said.

"You've done very well," Zu An said with a nod, then asked, "Are they hiding here?"

Zhang Zitong replied, "I followed your respected self's orders and saw that Lu Sanyuan indeed sent his disciple Ding Xia to investigate this place. I followed him here, then saw him pace back and forth repeatedly in front of this spirit screen for a long time, before finally sighing in relief and leaving."

Zu An walked up to the screen she was talking about. It was the same kind of spirit screen one would often find in fully-enclosed courtyards; the only difference was that the wall was especially smooth and sleek, as if it were carved from jade. He could even see his own reflection. If it were polished, it could even be used as a mirror.

He looked around, and a smile gradually appeared on the corners of his lips. He remarked, "So that was what happened!"

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Chapter 2019: Reunion

Zhang Zitong was completely confused. When she saw his smile, she couldn't help but ask, "What's going on?"

"There's a space hidden behind this mirror. Someone tried to cover it up through some special techniques, and I reckon it's probably the work of that Chi Fuzi," Zu An said. Meanwhile, he tapped the mirror with his finger, moving around some engraved beast statues in the corners.

Afterward, the entire mirror began glowing with a faint green light. Soon after, that light changed based on the surrounding layout, and began to gradually fade away. The spirit screen no longer looked like a wall; instead, ripples spread across its surface as if it were made of water.

Zhang Zitong reached out her finger and lightly touched the surface, causing it to ripple once again. She couldn't help but exclaim in pleasant surprise, "So there was a space behind it after all, sir!"

Zu An found her childish reaction rather amusing.

*Just how did this woman manage to become a silver token envoy?*

Zhang Zitong suddenly cried out in alarm. She seemed to be pulled into the space, falling straight in.

Zu An's expression changed. He immediately grabbed her other hand, and felt a powerful suction force from the screen. He realized that it seemed to be the power of the space and not someone scheming against them.

The two of them were sucked into the spirit screen in the blink of an eye. They felt a sense of weightlessness, then suddenly fell to the ground. Zhang Zitong staggered and couldn't stand steadily. Fortunately, Zu An was holding her hand and helped her regain her balance.

"Thank you, sir," Zhang Zitong said. When she felt the heat from his hand, her heart beat quickly.

*Sir might normally act cold, but he still cares about me deep down. Otherwise, he wouldn't have immediately entered to grab my hand and save me.*

"Are you scared?" Zu An asked. When he sensed her abnormal heartbeat, he was a bit puzzled.

Zhang Zitong wanted to say that she wasn't scared, but after thinking about it, she nodded in embarrassment, saying, "I've never encountered something like this before, so I am a bit scared." That gave her a proper reason to continue holding onto Sir Eleven's hand!

Unfortunately, Zu An didn't give her the chance and naturally let her go, saying, "There's not much to be scared of. Just follow behind me."

"Oh," Zhang Zitong said. She was a bit disappointed, but when she saw how he was protecting her, she immediately felt much better. That put her in the mood to look around. She felt a sense of familiarity from the nearby structures and couldn't help but become a bit stunned, exclaiming, "Huh? We're still in our original location?"

"Of course not. This is the world behind the spirit screen," Zu An said as he walked forward.

Zhang Zitong quickly followed him, remarking, "Huh? It does seem a bit different. Many places here seem to be inverted. Also, the sky is a bit hazy and gloomy-looking."

Zu An used the jade badge to look around, but he didn't detect any living creatures around him. His divine sense couldn't be expanded too far, clearly because the surrounding fog had the ability to block off divine sense. He was already used to having his divine sense always active, so being in this kind of place made him feel as if he had gone blind. It really wasn't a great feeling.

The two followed a bluestone path; up ahead was another fully enclosed courtyard. One side's entrance was open, and the bluestone path continued inside.

"These entrances all look exactly the same," Zhang Zitong said. She turned around and immediately exclaimed in horror, "It looks completely identical to the one we entered from!" Her voice echoed through the courtyard, which added an even stronger sense of eeriness.

However, Zu An was surprisingly calm. He continued to walk forward past the long bluestone path, and the two soon saw that they had once again returned to their original starting point. The screen wall across the gate of the house towered in front of them, but there were no more ripples; instead, it was now hard stone.

"We can't go back!" Zhang Zitong cried out, trembling a bit. She had no idea what was happening to her either. In the past, whenever she was in these kinds of dangerous situations, she had always been quite tough and quickly thought of solutions. And yet, when she was at Sir Eleven's side, she became a weak young lady who actually felt scared.

"This thing became a wall after we entered. Did you not notice it back then?" Zu An replied casually while observing the surrounding terrain.

Zhang Zitong blushed with shame. She really had been a bit too careless. She said, "We were clearly walking forward the entire time, so why did we return here?"

"Many formations have similar effects. The space here has been distorted to some extent, throwing off one's sense of direction," Zu An explained while walking forward.

"Could this be a so-called 'ghostly wall'?" Zhang Zitong asked doubtfully when she saw him continue to walk forward. "Didn't we walk this way before? Should we try a different path?"

"It does seem similar to a ghostly wall, but this place seems a bit more profound," Zu An replied. "Normally, after experiencing what just happened, someone would reflexively choose a different route, unaware that they would simply fall into exactly the mindset the enemy wanted them to have. Continue forward. I need to investigate what exactly is going on with the spatial displacement here." After a pause, he added, "How about you walk in front this time?"

"Huh?" Zhang Zitong asked, feeling shaken up.

*Could it be that sir wants me to scout the way and trigger the traps? I heard that there were some ruthless types in the Embroidered Envoy, people who would use their subordinates as cannon fodder. But Sir Eleven shouldn't be that kind of person, right?*

She took a deep breath and said, "Fine!" Then, she stepped forward. However, she wasn't confident and bold like usual, and instead took very small steps like a young miss raised in a distinguished clan.

When he saw her trembling, Zu An couldn't help but smile. He said, "Don't be scared; I'll make sure to protect you."

Zhang Zitong sighed in relief. She gathered the courage to ask, "Why does sir need me to walk in front?"

"Two reasons. The first is that I need to be outside the box," Zu An said directly.

"Outside the box?" Zhang Zitong asked, feeling a bit confused.

Zu An explained, "The one trapped within the puzzle might be baffled, but an onlooker can see clearly. I need to borrow the long legs you've been blessed with as a reference point to study the behavior of this place."

"Huh?" Zhang Zitong exclaimed in surprise, never having expected that to be the reason. Even though she had always been quite satisfied with her legs, this was the first time she had heard of such a use for them. When she saw that Zu An was being serious, she didn't let herself think wayward thoughts for fear of disrupting his line of thinking. She asked, "Then what about the other reason?"



"Oh, it's just that in this kind of tense situation, being able to admire such beautiful legs will improve my mood a bit. Who knows, it might even help me come up with the solution," Zu An said with a smile.

"Sir~" Zhang Zitong pouted playfully.

*Is he flirting with me right now?*

"You don't feel as nervous as you were earlier anymore, right?" Zu An asked suddenly, looking at her.

"I do feel much more at ease," Zhang Zitong said. She thought to herself, *So sir did this to help me with my nervousness. I was going to say, how could someone as serious as sir flirt with me?*

However, she felt a mysterious sense of sadness when she thought of that.

As they continued along the long bluestone path, the two chatted happily. They eventually arrived at a courtyard with entrances on all four sides. They chose the door right in front of them again, only to arrive at the next bluestone path. Sure enough, they returned back to the same spot they had entered from.

This was a really sinister place, but when Zhang Zitong thought about how Sir Eleven was looking at her legs from behind, she didn't feel as cold anymore. Instead, she felt as if there were a wave of heat crawling up her legs.

"So that was what was going on," Zu An suddenly said.

Zhang Zitong was startled, asking, "What is sir thinking about?"

"It seems as if we've returned to the same point, but in reality, it's not. The one who created this formation deliberately made this place seem more mysterious by making all of the buildings identical to confuse the ones trapped. It's to subconsciously make you feel as if you've returned to the starting point no matter what you do. That way, you'd feel more and more alarmed and make all kinds of incorrect judgments."

While speaking, Zu An took out a formation disc. His fingers moved quickly, and small flags flew out in all directions in the air. Then, he grabbed a clump of formation papers and tossed them out. They quickly scattered and turned

into small paper cranes. They flapped their wings and flew in the direction of those formation flags.

Zhang Zitong's eyes widened, because she saw several small specks of light move across Sir Eleven's formation disc. They clearly represented the paper cranes that had just left. As the specks of light spread out, the formation disc gradually produced a three-dimensional map.

She asked, "What is this?"

"Complete Hologram Formation," Zu An said. This was a formation he had created by borrowing some concepts from the Baopu Sutra and his knowledge of science from his previous world, together with Yan Xiang's help. It specialized in exploring unknown places. The only flaw was that in order to activate it, the user had to have a rough idea of the terrain they were exploring.

"When did sir become so skilled at formations?" Zhang Zitong asked, feeling quite perplexed.

"I learned it recently," Zu An replied casually.

Zhang Zitong was speechless.

*Formation and runes contain such wide-ranging and profound knowledge; who in the world could reach your level if they just started recently?*

...

While they were chatting, a complete map took form on the formation disc. Zu An gave it a look and said with a smile, "So it was there." Then, he quickly led Zhang Zitong and ran forward. Sure enough, things were different with a map.

"Slow down, I can't keep up!" Zhang Zitong cried out, gasping for air. At first, she was trying to remember the way, but then Zu An took her left and right through the courtyard. Sometimes, he even went back a segment. Then, the scenery before them immediately became different from before. After they circled a few times, she was almost about to faint from dizziness. She decided to just close her eyes and just let Zu An do whatever he wanted.

After an unknown amount of time passed, the sound of wind by her ears finally stopped. Then, she finally opened her eyes again, still feeling lingering

fear. A different courtyard appeared in front of her. Sitting at the very center was a woman with hair reaching all the way to her bottom, her eyes closed in meditation. Next to the woman, the Empress Lantern cast down a gentle radiance, enveloping everything within ten meters around her.

“Yun Jianyue!” Zhang Zitong exclaimed softly in shock, but also fear. She hadn’t expected them to actually enter the place where the Devil Sect Master was cultivating in seclusion! This was a wanted criminal of the court! If they captured her, forget about being forgiven for her crimes, perhaps she would even be able to become an Embroidered Envoy again.

She was just about to draw her weapon when Zu An moved first. However, the Empress Lantern seemed to have sensed intruders and immediately erupted with light, surrounding his entire body.

“Sir, be careful!” Zhang Zitong exclaimed. She naturally knew just how formidable Yun Jianyue’s Empress Lantern was. If one were to be surrounded by its light, one wouldn’t be able to move at all, becoming a vulnerable target. However, she was soon stunned. Black vortexes appeared around Sir Eleven’s entire body; the light couldn’t touch him at all, as it was all sucked into the vortexes.

*Sir is so much stronger than I imagined...*

Zu An walked forward a bit. He was about to reach Yun Jianyue when a poignant crescent moon hacked toward him at a vicious angle.

Zhang Zitong was really nervous now. That was Yun Jianyue’s famous weapon, the Crescent Ring! Countless experts had died under its blade. However, the following scene made her rub her eyes in confusion. The Crescent Ring didn’t attack Sir Eleven; instead, it danced around him, as if it was really excited.

“Just what is going on?” Zhang Zitong wondered, feeling completely bewildered. Even so, she didn’t dwell on that, since this was a good thing. Sir Eleven wasn’t in front of that witch, who seemed to be asleep in secluded cultivation. Now was the perfect time to dominate... her?

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Chapter 2020: Did I Come at a Bad Time?

Zhang Zitong was completely dumbstruck by the sight in front of her.

*Who am I? Where am I? What was I doing?*

*Sir Eleven probably restrained that witch somehow. Yeah, that has to be what happened.*

That was the only explanation she could think of. Even so, she was still a bit confused.

*Do you really need to hug each other to place a restriction on her?*

*Furthermore, sir's hands are on that witch's abdomen and chest, and yet that witch isn't showing the slightest bit of resistance!*

...

Meanwhile, Zu An was actually extremely nervous. Earlier, when he had entered her defensive range, the Empress Lantern and Crescent Moon had attacked on their own, but Yun Jianyue didn't react at all.

When he arrived at her side, sure enough, he saw that her aura was extremely weak. Her lifeforce was like a waning candle that could go out at any time. He couldn't be bothered with thoughts of wasting precious resources. He immediately took out the Feather Mountain Spring Water he had obtained from the Xia Dynasty secret dungeon and fed it to her. Then, he took her into his arms, one hand pressed against her dantian and the other on her chest acupoint to pour a vast amount of ki into her and help her treat her injuries.

Zhang Zitong's eyes widened.

*One is the Embroidered Envoy Chief Commander, while the other is a Devil Sect witch. Shouldn't these two be enemies, like a cat and mouse? Why do they look like lovers embracing each other instead?*

She wanted to head over and take a look, but the Empress Lantern and Crescent Ring that guarded Yun Jianyue's surroundings on their own didn't allow her the chance. Helpless to do anything else, she could only ask from a distance, "Sir, what is your respected self doing?"

"I'm saving her. She suffered a serious injury," Zu An replied without thinking twice.

Zhang Zitong sighed in relief.

*So that's what's happening... A living Devil Sect Master is definitely much more valuable than a dead one. Sir Eleven has acute foresight as expected. And here I was thinking that he...*

*I was wrong!*

Just like that, Zu An continued to pour in ki endlessly. Yun Jianyue's complexion eventually became a bit rosier. She groaned, then gradually woke up. When she realized that she was actually in the arms of a man, she was about to flip out when a familiar voice suddenly said in her ear, "It's me." He set up a sound blocking field around them so no one could hear their conversation.

"Ah Zu?" Yun Jianyue exclaimed. She was surprised, but incredibly happy as she continued, "Am I dreaming?"

Outside, Zhang Zitong was stunned.

*That witch seems to be calling out Sir Eleven's name? But for some reason, I can't hear what they're saying clearly.*

*Yun Jianyue is reacting as if the two of them are very close...*

Now, things became much more complicated. Two individuals who should have been sworn enemies were actually so familiar with each other!

*Is Yun Jianyue sir's spy, or is sir a spy Yun Jianyue planted?*

"What exactly happened to you? How did you end up with such serious injuries?" Zu An asked, looking at Yun Jianyue with concern.

If not for the fact that Yun Jianyue's cultivation was extremely high, such injuries would already have been enough to end her life several times over. Even so, her current condition wasn't too good. If Zu An had been even two hours late, she would already be a corpse. Even after the nourishment of his rich ki, he only managed to keep her alive for the time being. Her condition could worsen at any time.

“Remember when Lu Sanyuan led the volunteer army to Violet Mountain to scheme against Zhao Han, and yet I didn’t receive any information about it? I came back to the sect to investigate that, Yun Jianyue said weakly. “But how could I have known how viciously Lu Sanyuan schemed? He had already prepared an entire rebellion.

“I was prepared for that possibility and had some backup plans, but I didn’t expect both the Yin Yang Path’s Fang Zhonghe and the Heavenly Devil School’s Elder Xi would betray me, or for even Chi Fuzi to side with Lu Sanyuan. I was caught off guard and immediately put at a disadvantage.

“If not for all the benefits I received from the daoist sects' secret dungeon, I might not have been able to escape disaster. Later, I successfully broke out of their encirclement, but because of my injuries, I couldn't shake them off. That was why I chose to flee here. This is a place successive generations of sect masters have used to flee from danger, but it's almost never been used. That's why only the sect masters knew about it.”

Zu An was stunned, saying, “I thought this place was used by Chi Fuzi’s group to trap you.”

Yun Jianyue shook her head and said, “This is a Mirror Soul Formation, something we use to stop enemies. Whenever the sect masters of the past experienced threats to their life, they would use this place as their last resort. Back then, Lu Sanyuan’s group also followed me into the formation, but they were trapped by the formation, unable to find where I really was. That Chi Fuzi is indeed formidable, though. He was unable to find me, but in spite of that, he was able to leave with the others he entered with.”

Zu An nodded, saying, “He set up a formation outside the spirit screen so you couldn't leave.”

“He overestimated me,” Yun Jianyue said, forcing a smile. Her face was a bit pale as she continued, “After I fell into their scheme, I planned to first recover from my injuries before finding a way to leave, but Fang Zhonghe’s palm force was too sinister. In order to neutralize the toxicity, I couldn't treat my injuries immediately. In the end, my injuries became even more severe than I had anticipated. If you hadn’t arrived promptly, I might already have been put to sleep forever.”

Zu An’s expression was strange as he asked, “The Ninefold Palm?”

“How do you know about that?” Yun Jianyue asked, blushing faintly. “That old thing is too despicable. If I hadn't been hit by that palm at the start, I wouldn't have been left in such a passive state.”

Zu An was starting to feel a bit of admiration. He had personally seen what kind of reaction Fang Zhonghe had after he was hit by the effects of his own palm.

He carefully examined the condition of Yun Jianyue's body and saw that all of her meridians were a mess. Many places had severe damage, as if they would completely shatter if even a bit more force was used. He asked, “Did you use the Star Shattering Imprint too many times?”

That was a skill she had previously taught him, one that allowed its user to display ten times their power, but there were strict restrictions on the number of uses one could employ. If that was exceeded, it could lead one's meridians to rupture, followed closely by death.

Yun Jianyue's expression became a bit unnatural as she said, “I only used it a few times. I was ambushed, then surrounded. In that situation, if I hadn't fought with everything I had, perhaps I would have already been killed by those people on the spot.”

Zu An knew that what she was saying was true. If it had been him, he would likely have made the same choice.

Yun Jianyue's voice was incredibly weak; her usual Devil Sect Master style was nowhere to be seen. Zu An felt a sense of pity well up inside of him. He took her into his arms and said, “I should have come earlier.”

Yun Jianyue initially wanted to reciprocate, but she discovered that she didn't even have the strength to speak anymore, and could only smile weakly. Her beautiful face no longer showed her usual tough and mighty demeanor; her expression actually looked a bit delicate.

Zu An's expression changed greatly. He could feel that her aura had suddenly become weaker, her injuries worsening. There was a real threat to her life. As such, he said, “Don't speak anymore for now. I'll bring you out first.”

This formation, for the sake of strengthening its secretive nature, had been isolated from the world outside. The amount of natural ki Yun Jianyue could receive here was naturally lower than in the outside world.

While holding Yun Jianyue carefully, Zu An poured ki into her body to protect her heart meridians. He kicked off the ground and headed for the exit.

When she saw him leave, Zhang Zitong hurriedly tried to keep up, calling out, "Sir!"

"Follow behind me," Zu An replied.

"Okay!" Zhang Zitong said. When she saw his grave expression, she had many questions bubble up within her, but she couldn't bring herself to ask about it.

Soon after, Zu An took the two women back to the first spirit screen. Perhaps because the formation had been solved, a ripple appeared on the wall again. He leaped through and quickly emerged from the wall.

"Sir, we escaped!" Zhang Zitong exclaimed excitedly. Compared to the gloomy fog in the formation, the outside world was much brighter.

"Go back on your own for now. I have things to take care of," Zu An said, then vanished with Yun Jianyue in his arms. She had already fainted, so he didn't dare to waste any time.

When she saw him disappear, Zhang Zitong's smile froze on her face. She released a long sigh, murmuring, "Go back on my own? Where would I go? Should I go back to the Yin Yang Path or just leave the Lake of Hatred? It's almost as if I'm ruining his happy moment or something."

She grumbled to herself, but in the end, she chose not to leave the Lake of Hatred and decided to go back to the Yin Yang Path first.

...

Meanwhile, Zu An swiftly took Yun Jianyue through the mountains and fields. In order to find her, he had already become extremely familiar with the Lake of Hatred's topography. Thus, he quickly took Yun Jianyue back to the sect master's private residence. It was the place Lu Sanyuan's trusted aides had been guarding, but after what happened in the Yin Yang Path was revealed, they had naturally dispersed in confusion.

He went straight to the rear court, because there was an outdoor spiritual spring there that was incredibly rich in ki. It was something only the sect



master had the privilege of enjoying. Cultivating there could result in twice the results with half the effort.

Yun Jianyue's current injuries were too serious, so the natural ki of the world was already far from enough, and Zu An needed to use the help of such natural blessings. Thus, he took out a formation disc and instantly arranged several ki condensation formations. They were able to gather the ki of the world and the spiritual spring within the formation.

Streak after streak of spiritual light appeared in the air. Then, Zu An took Yun Jianyue into the hot spring. After doing so, he used the Primordial Origin Sutra to start treating her injuries. If it were anyone else, he would naturally be hesitant, but the two of them already had the closest of relationships, so he wouldn't have such misgivings.

With the nurturing of the spiritual spring, and as her clothes were undone, Yun Jianyue gradually woke up. When she saw the outdoor environment, she couldn't help but become embarrassed, saying, "Not... Not here." This was the Lake of Hatred! If members of the Devil Sect caught them in the act, she would be way too embarrassed!

Zu An was a bit speechless. He replied, "Do you think I want to do this either? You might die at any time, so this is the only method I can use to save you!"

"I really don't know where you learned such a dirty treatment method..." Yun Jianyue muttered. Even though her body was weak, her eyes were full of emotion. She immediately became full of seduction and allure as she said, "Even so, that's perfect, because I've been holding myself back to keep Fang Zhonghe's poison in check. Now that I'm with you... I don't need to hold myself back anymore."

Then, getting a surge of strength from some unknown place, she kissed him. Her usual domineering side was just based on the misunderstandings of outsiders; only now did she show the power of the Devil Sect's history's most powerful charm skill.

Almost no man could refuse such a temptation, but Zu An remained clear-headed. Yun Jianyue was like a porcelain doll that was covered in cracks. Just the slightest bit of force would make her shatter. In order to help her repair her meridians, he could only use the most gentle strength. It was hard for him to even say whether the process was enjoyment or torture.

...

After a long time had passed, a beautiful figure flew over, muttering, "Huh? Why can I sense that someone is using Heavenly Devil Temptation..."

After Qiu Honglei dealt with the Yin Yang Path's affairs, she hadn't been able to find Zu An. She hadn't known where her master was either, so she was feeling incredibly nervous.

As she searched, however, she'd suddenly sensed a familiar aura, making her incredibly happy. Only her master could reach such a level in the entire Holy Sect.

She rushed over excitedly, but when she saw the scene in the spring, she was completely stunned.

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## **Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2021: No, You Came at the Perfect Time**

Chapter 2021: No, You Came at the Perfect Time

Qiu Honglei had imagined countless possibilities, such as her master fighting bitterly with an enemy, or her being seriously injured and needing help. She had even considered the possibility that Ah Zu already saved her master.

However, she had never imagined that her master would indeed be fighting an intense battle... but with Ah Zu, and a battle of the flesh at that.

*Master really is beautiful... Even as another woman, I feel extremely moved. Her perfect body looks as if it's covered in a layer of sunset glow. She really is a masterpiece of heaven. Her long hair that's sticking to her skin because of the water adds a bit more extravagance to her appearance too.*

The master she respected and loved had her fingers interlaced with the one she loved the most, and she simply looked too happy. Everything seemed to be happening so naturally.

In that instant, Qiu Honglei felt as if a bucket of cold water had been dumped on her. Her entire body went completely ice-cold. She didn't feel any disappointment or anger. Instead, she felt completely numb. She said calmly, "Sorry, I came at a bad time." She turned around and left afterward.

Zu An really wanted to act confident and at ease like suave brother Jiao, with the response "No, you came at the perfect time", but he discovered that he just couldn't bring himself to say it.

Both he and Yun Jianyue were stunned. They had imagined countless scenarios in which they would be seen, but they had never expected it to be like this, that they would be caught in such a sorry state.

Zu An was a bit vexed. Yun Jianyue's injuries were too severe, so he had been completely focused on repairing her meridians. The slightest bit of carelessness could have resulted in failure. Furthermore, the defensive formations had been designed to not activate against people he was close to, so as not to accidentally harm them. That was why he had only noticed Qiu Honglei when she was already right in front of them, but it was already too late by then.

Yun Jianyue's mind went completely blank. In that instant, she even had thoughts of ending her own life. The abrupt incident brought an extreme feeling of shock. Her entire body started shaking all over.

Zu An sucked in air through his teeth. In that instant, he couldn't hold it in anymore.

Now, Yun Jianyue became even more embarrassed. She quickly hollered, "Honglei, don't misunderstand! This is just to get rid of Fang Zhonghe's palm poison! Ah Zu is only doing this to save me!"

Qiu Honglei briefly paused, but she still continued walking without turning back.

Yun Jianyue was embarrassed and nervous. She quickly pushed Zu An aside, exclaiming, "Are you not going to chase after her?!" What kind of a situation were they already in?! And yet this kid was still moving on her body...

After some hesitation, Zu An shook his head and said, "Your injuries are at a critical point. I can't let my efforts be ruined because of this."

"But..." Yun Jianyue wanted to say something else, but Zu An shushed her.

"I'll treat you first, then look for Qiu Honglei," Zu An said; his reason still won out in the end. He knew that if he left now, Yun Jianyue's wounds could worsen, and she could even pass away. If that happened, then it would really be too late for regrets.

*But Honglei...*

*Sigh, it really is hard to satisfy both sides in this world. Even if I'm already the strongest in this world, so what? I'm still so powerless in many affairs.*

...

After what just happened, the spiritual spring had become much colder and cheerless. There was no more room for joy.

"I really am a bad master," Yun Jianyue said. Normally, she was really tough. No matter how bad the injury, no matter how much she was wronged, her will had always been as hard as steel. And yet, right now, tears couldn't help but flow down from the corners of her eyes.

"It's not your fault. It's because I'm trash," Zu An said with a sigh.

"You were only doing this to save me..." Yun Jianyue said, becoming more and more dispirited as she spoke. It was clear that no one had done anything wrong, so why had they all been hurt so deeply?

The two became increasingly silent. There was no more of the usual passion.

After another two hours, Zu An finally finished treating Yun Jianyue. Yun Jianyue couldn't be bothered to get dressed again. She quickly pushed Zu An away and said, "Hurry up and go after Honglei!"

Zu An voiced his agreement. He hastily put on his clothes again and ran in the direction Qiu Honglei had disappeared in. He traveled for several hundred li. Along the way, he spread his divine sense and used the jade badge to aid in his search, but he couldn't find her anywhere. He realized that she had deliberately hidden herself, so he had no choice but to return to the Lake of Hatred first.

...

Inside the Devil Sect General Headquarters' temple, Yun Jianyue was absent-mindedly handling all kinds of administrative affairs.

While he was treating her, Zu An had already given her a rough explanation of everything that happened. When she heard that an outstanding hero like Lu Sanyuan had ended up dying like that, she sighed, but she also felt really refreshed when she heard about what had happened while Zu An impersonated her. It was to the point that she even asked him to change into a woman again to show her what it was like. Of course, that 'rude' request was strongly refused by Zu An. But after what had just happened, it all just felt dull.

She had to admit that Honglei was quite capable, taking care of everything in a clear and orderly manner. Even the following audit and the matter of guarding against th/e foreign monster parasites had been considered carefully. All she needed to do was just a bit more work here and there.

She suddenly thought of something. She tasked the other elders with continuing to make future plans before leaving. After seeing how 'she' had dominated the entire situation, who else in the Devil Sect dared to say anything against her? They even felt that it was inappropriate to trouble her with such trivial matters to begin with. They all worked enthusiastically, the discussion quickly entering full swing.

Yun Jianyue left the temple and quickly saw Zu An next to a pillar, all alone. Her expression immediately became a bit bitter as she asked, "Where is Honglei?"

"I didn't find her," Zu An said gloomily. He gave her a rough account of where he had looked.

Yun Jianyue sighed and said, "I also called on some people to look for her, but I didn't find her either. Honglei is very familiar with the Lake of Hatred. If she wanted to hide here, no one would be able to find her. Also, if I'm not mistaken, she has likely already left the Lake of Hatred and returned to the real world."

That was the conclusion Zu An had come to as well. The outside world was just too large. If she really wanted to go into hiding, it would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.

“Once I finish dealing with the sect’s affairs, I’ll go out with you to look for her,” Yun Jianyue said, but shook her head as soon as she said that. “No, I can’t go with you. We’ll just do our own thing.”

Zu An was stunned, asking, “Why not?”

Yun Jianyue gave him an annoyed look and replied, “What do you think? If Honglei sees the two of us moving together, do you think she’ll show up and meet us?”

When he heard that, Zu An became quiet. However, after seeing how thin and pallid she was, he couldn't help but say, “Your serious injuries have only begun to heal, so you can't use any ki for a month. Otherwise, I might not be able to save you again.”

“I know what I’m doing,” Yun Jianyue replied.

Zu An knew that she was the famous and respected Devil Sect Master, so he couldn't really say much more.

Yun Jianyue seemed to have realized that her tone was a bit harsh. She said, “I helped move that little female friend of yours to the courtyard next door. It’s already quite late, so you should get some rest.”

Zu An was confused, asking, “What little female friend?”

“The one with the long legs. The foul Yin Yang Path isn't a good place for women,” Yun Jianyue said in annoyance. If it weren't for Fang Zhonghe, she wouldn’t have ended up in such a terrible situation all this time. She wondered how Honglei was doing now.

“That’s just an Embroidered Envoy subordinate,” Zu An said, a bit speechless.

“Fine, fine, fine. A subordinate it is,” Yun Jianyue said. She wasn’t in the mood to argue about that either. She left while brooding over her thoughts.

Zu An wanted to call after her, but he slowly lowered his raised hand. After what just happened, he could sense that not only had Honglei left, he even felt that Yun Jianyue was distancing herself from him.

...

Zu An put on his mask and returned to the courtyard.

Zhang Zitong had been waiting anxiously by the door of the room. She asked, "Sir, what kind of relationship do you have with that witch... ahem, Sect Master Yun?"

Zu An said coldly, "Back in the Embroidered Envoy, did no one tell you that the more secrets you knew, the more easily you'd be killed?"

Zhang Zitong stuck out her tongue and said, "That Sect Master Yun really is amazing. I only heard that she easily defeated a rebellion from the sect's most powerful experts, and she even defeated a terrifying monster from another world. She really is a valiant heroine! I'm even starting to admire her. Only a woman like this has lived a true life without regrets!"

Zu An was speechless. He couldn't just tell her that the woman she spoke of was actually him, right?

"Sir's mood doesn't seem to be that great," Zhang Zitong said; she finally realized that something was off with him.

Zu An had all kinds of thoughts running through his mind. He sighed and replied, "I seem to have lost an extremely, extremely important person today. Also, I might lose another one soon."

Zhang Zitong blinked, asking, "With your incredible abilities, can't sir just find that person?"

"What if I can't?" Zu An replied.

"Who can't the Embroidered Envoy find in this world?" Zhang Zitong asked.

"You couldn't even find the Lake of Hatred, right?" Zu An retorted.

"That's only because it's the Devil Sect. Now that even the Devil Sect Master is your friend, she can just help you look," Zhang Zitong said.

Zu An was speechless.

"What is it? Did I say something wrong?" Zhang Zitong asked.

"Go away. I want some time alone," Zu An replied.

"Those two important people must be women. I didn't expect sir to be someone with love troubles even with your status. I really don't know just what

kind of woman could actually receive sir's favor. Alright, I'll write a novel called 'The Adulterous Relationship of the Embroidered Envoy Chief Commander and the Devil Sect Master'. What does sir think?" Zhang Zitong continued.

Zu An suddenly turned around, a cold expression appearing in his eyes.

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## Chapter 2022: Secrets Covered in Dust

Zhang Zitong was startled by Zu An's reaction. She quickly waved her hands and said, "I was just speaking randomly! Sir, please don't treat it as anything serious."

At the same time, her heart was beating crazily. She had only planned to tease sir a bit, since no matter how she thought about it, that seemed like the most impossible situation. However, judging from sir's reaction, her guess didn't seem to be that far from the truth!

*I'm finished, I'm finished! Why did I just have to be such a gossip? Now sir is going to silence me! I'm dead for sure, sniff...*

When he saw her huddle up nervously like a kitten, Zu An said with a sneer, "Don't speak randomly in the future, or else you'll die without even knowing why."

"Yes, yes, yes," Zhang Zitong said, nodding like a little chick, but she was extremely grateful.

*Sir really treats me differently. He actually couldn't bear to silence me.*

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door.

"Who is it?" Zhang Zitong hurriedly asked.

"Me," Yun Jianyue replied from outside.

Zhang Zitong immediately had the look of a gossip again. However, when she recalled how she had almost lost her life just now, she could only struggle to hold back the grin on her face.



Zu An opened the door and asked, "Why are you here?"

Yun Jianyue ignored him and looked at Zhang Zitong instead. When she saw that their clothes were still in order, she nodded in satisfaction and said, "I just received some news and came to tell you."

Zu An turned around to give Zhang Zitong a look. Then, he closed the door and entered the courtyard, asking, "What did you find out?"

Yun Jianyue reached out her hand, and a shining gold cicada appeared in it. She said, "This was found in Lu Sanyuan's treasury. It seems to be something called a Blacklight Golden Cicada. I heard that you've been refining artifacts recently, and figured you might have some use for it."

Zu An was immediately overjoyed. He held the golden cicada admiringly. He replied, "It's not just some use; you're really helping me in my hour of need!"

This was precisely the material Mo Xi needed to break through into the master rank! Apart from coming to the Lake of Hatred to save Yun Jianyue and Qiu Honglei, that was his only other main objective. He hadn't expected things to go so smoothly!

A happy look also appeared on Yun Jianyue's face. Then, she gave him a ring and said, "This is Lu Sanyuan's storage pouch. You can take it as well."

Zu An was stunned, replying, "Isn't it fine for you to keep this?"

Yun Jianyue shook her head, saying, "You were the one who defeated Lu Sanyuan, and I should be thanking you for that. This should be yours to begin with. If you refuse me here, I'll only think that you want even more."

When he heard what she said, Zu An really couldn't bring himself to refuse. He said, "Then, thank you."

At the same time, he felt extremely strange inside. Could it be that he really was born to be a moocher? Bi Linglong provided for him, Liu Ning provided for him, and now, even Yun Jianyue was taking care of him!

When she saw him take it, a faint smile appeared on Yun Jianyue's face as well. She said, "Get some rest. I'll be leaving first."

As he watched her beautiful figure begin to leave, Zu An thought of something and asked, "How are your injuries now?"

Yun Jianyue's body trembled. She quietly replied, "How could they possibly heal that fast?"

Zu An suggested, "Should I help you a bit?"

What he received in reply was a mysterious silence. However, just when he was even starting to regret what he said, Yun Jianyue said, "Okay."

Then, she quickly left as if she was embarrassed, leaving only a faint fragrance in the air. Zu An was a bit stunned, but then he followed excitedly.

When she saw them leave one after the other, Zhang Zitong, who was secretly watching them, scoffed. "Hmph, look at those adulterers!"

...

Meanwhile, when Yun Jianyue returned to her own courtyard and saw the man following her, she asked stiffly, "What did you follow me for?"

"To help you out a bit, of course," Zu An said with a deadly earnest expression.

Yun Jianyue bit her lip and said, "You clearly already healed me before."

"That was all just done in a rush. There are still some things I haven't taken care of yet," Zu An said quickly.

Yun Jianyue was about to say something, but then stopped. In the end, she didn't reply and turned around to enter her room. She didn't close the door behind her, however.

Zu An, of course, tactfully entered. Soon after, a sob emerged from inside.

"I feel that this isn't fair for Honglei."

"Me too."

"???"

"I'm only doing this to heal you. That way, you can heal faster, and then you can look for her."

"That mouth of yours is way too sweet. No wonder so many women have fallen for your tricks."

"Sigh, I'm clearly speaking the truth here though."

"Hmph, if you had to choose between me and Honglei, who would you choose?"

"...Those aren't words that should be coming out of the mouth of the glorious Devil Sect Master."

"I don't care. You have to pick one."

"Fine, I want everything!"

"Go... to hell!"

"...You were the one who made me answer."

"You silly man. Remember, no matter who asks you this question in the future, you have to choose them. You must remember that. In the future, if Honglei asks you this question, you have to say you would choose her."

"But I can't bear to part with you either..."

"The fact that I can be together with you now is already the greatest happiness of my life. You belong to Honglei, and I've already stolen from her something that should be returned to its rightful owner."

Zu An was speechless.

"Hey, annoying mister, are you listening to me?"

"Of course."

"Then why do I feel as if your attention is all down there?"

"There's no need for this to be either-or, I think."

"Huh? I'm going to bite you!"

“Don’t be so tense, or else I won’t be able to treat you properly.”

“Forget about the injuries!”

...

The next morning, when Zu An returned to his courtyard while rubbing his lower back, he saw Zhang Zitong stare at him with a strange expression. He immediately lowered his hand and asked with a cough, “Were you standing here all night?”

Zhang Zitong muttered, “Do you take me for a husband-longing rock...” As if realizing that what she'd said was a bit inappropriate, she immediately added, “I was worried that sir would be befuddled by that witch, so I waited here for further instructions.”

Zu An was speechless. He retorted, “Go to sleep already!”

“Oh.”

Zhang Zitong had indeed stood outside all night. Now that she loosened up again, she quickly fell asleep.

Zu An took the chance to summon Mo Xi. Mo Xi was incredibly beautiful to begin with, but her fur clothing and miniskirt made her look even more charming and seductive. She clearly didn’t have Daji’s charm skills, but her entire body gave off a sense of vigor. Whenever one saw her, their first reaction would likely be to take her to bed and subdue her.

Unfortunately, Zu An was currently experiencing absolute ‘clarity’. He calmly took out the Blacklight Golden Cicada to help her with her breakthrough.

Mo Xi could clearly sense the allure of the golden cicada in his hands. Her slightly vacant eyes erupted with strange light, and she moved over with an eager expression.

In response, Zu An couldn't help but smile. He didn’t let her eat the Blacklight Golden Cicada, and instead placed the item by her navel like the system instructed; he then used it together with the other breakthrough materials. Perhaps because she could feel that she was making a breakthrough because of his help, or perhaps because she couldn't sense the slightest bit of

desire from him, Mo Xi didn't refuse the physical contact. Instead, she closed her eyes in enjoyment.

Streaks of golden light erupted from Mo Xi's body. Ki surged from her entire body and released a kind of special aura. She quickly broke through into the master rank.

Even though Mo Xi couldn't speak, Zu An could clearly sense that she seemed to be thanking him, noticing the joy she felt.

Zu An then thought of something. He took out the storage pouches of Old Mi and Eunuch Wei, placing them in front of her. Mo Xi was already at the master rank, so the 'Farewell Nanchao' skill would now be able to easily sever the imprints left on them.

Sure enough, with a cut from her, the storage pouches that had been filled with defenses were easily opened. Zu An reached inside one and found a notebook. After some hesitation, he opened it up. When he finished reading the contents, his expression turned dark.

After an unknown amount of time passed, an ember appeared at the center of his palm. The notebook quickly burned to ashes. Under the light of the flames, Zu An's face flickered between light and dark.

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Chapter 2023: Good Guy Card

Suddenly, Zu An sensed something and took out a jade strip. A soft light shone intermittently from it. It was the communication jade strip he had made, and the light meant he received a message.

He opened it up and saw a pretty portrait flashing. It was Bi Linglong's profile picture. She wasn't dressed in her crown princess or empress ceremonial outfits, but rather a soft silk dress. There wasn't as much of her usual dignified appearance, instead, there was more of a relaxed, personable feeling to it.

Zu An couldn't help but smile. He was still fiddling with the selfie function himself, but she had already figured it out.

“Ah Zu, is my new profile picture pretty?”

“It is~” Zu An wrote on the jade strip. The characters turned into specks of light that entered the strip.

He and Shen Xuzi had modified the jade strip earlier, but they just couldn't figure out how to make it send messages in real time. Sometimes, it worked normally, but more often than not, one just couldn't receive any messages. They just couldn't figure out what was going on there.

“Ah! I actually got in touch with you! I thought that you wouldn't receive my message,” Bi Linglong replied. Zu An could sense how happy she was even through just the text. She continued, “Then do you think I'm prettier like this, or am I prettier in my empress dress? Or maybe my crown princess clothes?”

“You're pretty no matter what you wear.”

“Tsk, you don't have a shred of sincerity. You have to pick one! Which one is the prettiest?”

“Actually, you're prettiest when you aren't wearing anything.”

“You're so annoying~”

A while later, Bi Linglong sent another message. “Ah Zu, why don't you have a profile picture yet?”

“I haven't had time yet, and I felt that there was no real need for one.”

“Of course you have to! I miss you, you know?”

Zu An immediately felt warm inside when he saw that message. His earlier gloominess was completely swept away. The past was already long gone; he had to cherish the people right in front of him.

“Take one for me right now, can you? Right, take a picture of your surroundings too.”

Zu An looked at the sleeping Zhang Zitong and immediately began to sweat.

*Feelings have to be constantly checked on...*

Back then, he had only installed the picture function in order to have a better chatting experience.

*Yeah, I definitely can't create a video call feature. Otherwise, I'll constantly be checked in on. That would be the same as crushing my own foot...*

“The surroundings seem pretty nice. Why do I feel as if your arrangement is the work of a woman?”

Zu An was speechless.

*The sixth sense of women really is too terrifying... I never expected she would even notice something like this.*

“I’m in the Devil Sect,” Zu An said, then gave her a rough summary of what had happened.

“I didn’t expect the monsters to have entered the Devil Sect... Who knows how many people have already sided with them in the world? But let’s talk about these proper affairs in person later. I don’t want to let this precious time be disturbed by these kinds of things.”

Zu An felt a bit helpless in this situation. He exclaimed, "Is this not important enough?!"

“Of course not. Chatting with you is more important. For example, what do you think about my new name?”

Bi Linglong changed her name to ‘Azuki Bean Linglong’.[1]

Zu An was dumbfounded. She had actually taught herself how to make an online username? He knew it was from the poem that he gifted her in the past, and the next line was ‘a yearning from deep within the bones, do you know it?’. She was clearly using it as a way to express her longing.

“I miss you too,” Zu An replied. As he wrote those words, he immediately felt really warm and comfortable.

“Then you have to change your name to match.”

Zu An was stunned.

*Are you kidding me? If I change my name to that, how will I explain myself when the other women see it?*

He had just survived a terrible battle between women; he really didn't want to create another huge disaster.

"Hm? Why can't I see your messages anymore? Did you go offline again? It seems the communication jade strip still isn't perfect."

Meanwhile, Bi Linglong was lying on the bed with her hand on her chin and a sweet smile on her face. When she saw that message, however, her smile immediately froze.

"Hm? Offline? I can clearly still see your messages though."

"Ah Zu?"

"Ugh, this shoddy jade strip. Why did you go offline at a time like this?"

...

When he saw the flood of messages, Zu An wiped the cold sweat off his face. In that instant, he felt that the unreliability of the jade strip wasn't necessarily such a bad thing anymore.

Suddenly, a profile pic of a young lady dressed in a really short leather miniskirt flickered onto the strip, with the profile name 'Wei Wu's Whip'.

Zu An was stunned.

"Brother-in-law, brother-in-law! I had another fight with Youzhao recently and beat her until she begged for forgiveness!" Chu Huanzhao said excitedly.

"You're probably the one who got beaten up badly by her, right?" Zu An remarked skeptically. After all, Huanzhao was known for being a cultivation idiot. There was no way that her cultivation could compare to Youzhao's.

"Tsk, no way. After you helped me increase my cultivation aptitude, I feel as if I'm crossing a thousand miles each day. Isn't beating up that kid Youzhao easy enough?"

Even though he couldn't see what she looked like right now, Zu An could clearly picture the proud look on her face.



"You're that amazing?!" Zu An replied happily. That was a good thing too, after all. With some competition, they'd help each other grow stronger.

After a pause, he added, "By the way, why do you have that stupid name?"

"Is it stupid? In the past, you told me that there was an emperor named Wei Wu you admired, who used a whip. I use a whip too, so I used his name. I feel as if it will make me look more impressive and make my cultivation better."

Zu An was speechless. How could this silly girl know that those two whips were completely different concepts? However, he couldn't really explain it to her either, and could only say with a darkened expression, "Just change it. A woman having this name doesn't sound great."

"If brother-in-law doesn't like it, I'll change it."

Then, 'Wei Wu's Whip' was changed to 'Please Whip Me, Brother-in-law'.

Zu An was speechless.

*Am I the weird one here, or is this young lady the weird one?*

"Brother-in-law, you whipped me really badly back then. I'll never forget that beating for the rest of my life."

"Change it, or else it'll be hard for you to explain yourself if your mother and sisters see this name."

"Don't worry, no one will see it. Mom said she wanted to look at my jade strip, but I didn't give it to her. We all know how badly she wants it!"

Zu An was speechless.

"Right, brother-in-law, in the future, whether it's me or Youzhao, if anyone's tone is a bit different, it might be mom secretly impersonating us. You can't tell her any of our secrets!"

"There's no such thing to begin with anyway," Zu An said with a scowl.

"For example, prodding me with that hard thing of yours back then, and how you touched every part of my body."

“Stop, stop! The first one was because you deserved a beating back then, and the second one was when I helped you expand your meridians and aid in your cultivation. Why does it all sound so weird when you're the one saying it?”

“But I’m also telling the truth.”

...

Just then, another profile popped up, named ‘King of Thrusting Kings’.

When he saw the tall and slender, tan-skinned young lady in the picture, Zu An was really taken aback. Why were these women’s names getting worse and worse?

Now that he thought about it, back when he had first used the internet, he had made up a lot of names that he thought were cool and amazing, but now that he thought back to them, they were all incredibly cringy.

“Big brother Zu, are you there?” Murong Qinghe asked.

“What is it, little sister Qinghe?” Zu An replied.

“Oh, you're here! That’s great,” Murong Qinghe sent before continuing.

“There was something bothering me and I didn’t have anyone else to talk to about it. In the end, I felt like I could only ask big brother Zu.”

Zu An was stunned. He really couldn’t figure out just what kind of trouble this young woman who acted like a little girl next to Youzhao, but was a tough and sturdy female warrior at all other times, had encountered. Besides that, she did have other womenfolk in the Murong clan. Why had she run all the way to him to talk to a grown man?

“What kind of trouble has little sister Qinghe encountered?” he asked curiously. Only after a long while did he receive a reply.

“I actually don’t know how to put it into words either, but when I thought about big brother Zu’s rich experience in romance, I wanted to consult you for advice.”

Zu An was speechless.

*Are you praising me here, or cursing me?*

"Big brother Zu should know about the situation between big brother Chu and me. Everyone already pretty much views us as a couple, and I like big brother Chu a lot too," Murong Qinghe explained, then continued.

"Still, even though big brother Chu is really good to me, I can still sense that he seems as if he's rejecting me sometimes. It's just hard for us to make any progress in our relationship. I've been wondering if maybe he doesn't actually like me that much, and that's why things are like this."

Zu An almost burst out laughing. So that was the situation. The answer was actually really simple, but he couldn't tell her.

Murong Qinghe sent another message. "Also, big brother Chu is working even harder than before. I thought our relationship would improve, but he only wants to compete with me and learn ways of beating his enemies. I really don't know just what kind of person he sees me as now! Does he see me as a lover, or just a childhood sweetheart and little sister?"

"It might be that he has his own secret troubles," Zu An replied. After some hesitation, he still decided to advise her, "Little sister Qinghe, there's actually no need for you to hang yourself to death on a single tree. Look around you. Who knows, you might find someone who is more suitable for you."

In order for the Chu clan to pass down their noble title, they had to make Chu Youzhao the heir. That meant Youzhao had to publicly take in a wife to settle down. Making a woman who knew nothing about the truth go through that was a bit too cruel. After getting closer to Murong Qinghe, he really didn't want her tender feelings to be turned in the wrong direction and ruin her lifetime of happiness.

However, who would have thought that after saying that, he wouldn't receive a reply? Zu An almost thought that she had disconnected, but just then, he received a new message.

"Big brother Zu, I know that you're really outstanding and that you're much stronger than big brother Chu. But my heart already belongs to big brother Chu, and I really don't have anything else to share with another person," Murong Qinghe sent, then continued.

"It's a pity that the first one I met wasn't you."

Zu An was stunned. He had never expected that his advice would end up with him throwing himself under the bus!

*She mysteriously received a good guy card, so she seems to have misunderstood and thought that I was hinting at something.*

...

Meanwhile, inside the Murong manor, Murong Qinghe's face was buried under her covers. She cried in embarrassment "Ahhh! Why did I have to send that message?!"

1. This is actually a line from a poem with the literal translation of 'exquisite dice, setting red beans at rest'. 'Linglong' means 'exquisite, detailed and fine'. The 'An' from 'Zu An' is also here through the word 'rest' ?

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Chapter 2024: Accident

Murong Qinghe's legs were kicking in the air, and her heart was beating really quickly.

*Judging from what big brother Zu said, was he implying that he likes me?*

*Big brother Zu is handsome and confident. His cultivation is so high too, so he's always been someone I admired...*

*Sigh, I can't think about this anymore. I can't do anything that'll let down big brother Chu.*

*But why did I just have to send that last message? Is there any undo function...*

*How will big brother Zu see me in the future? Won't big brother Chu be disappointed if he finds out?*

...

While she was rolling back and forth on her bed in disappointment, Zu An was between laughter and tears as he looked at the jade strip in his hands.

*Just what kind of misunderstanding is that lass entertaining?*

Even so, he couldn't really explain any further. After all, a young lady still had her pride to worry about. As such, the two of them just tacitly agreed to end the awkward conversation.

Just then, another portrait flickered, and a message appeared, reading, "Big brother Zu, are you there?"

The picture was of Sang Qien carrying her daughter Sisi. The baby was adorable, and the woman was dignified and beautiful. Her face conveyed the warm and enchanting air of a young married woman. Her name was also very simple: Little Qien.

"Little Qien, why haven't you slept yet?"

"I just fed Sisi. I'm already in bed."

A scene suddenly appeared in Zu An's mind. There had been one night when he play-fought over his daughter's food... That was really a wonderful memory.

"It's really hard on you, raising the child all alone."

"It's not hard. Many people are helping me, especially Dandan."

When he sensed that she was clearly being a bit reserved, Zu An took the initiative to reply, "Have you been missing me since then?"

Within the small courtyard in the academy's rear mountain, Sang Qien's face immediately turned red when she saw the message. She wrote a lot, but she deleted everything in the end. In the end, she only wrote 'yeah'.

"Then how about you let me hear you call me 'husband' once?" came the reply.

Sang Qien's cheeks became bright red. She secretly looked behind her, then quickly wrote, 'yes my husband!'.

After writing that, she pressed the jade strip against her chest for fear that someone would see.

"That's my sweet and wonderful wife," came another message.

Sang Qien's heart practically shot up into her throat.

*Big brother Zu really is daring! He can even write something so embarrassing just like that!*

And yet, when she thought about how he usually acted, she didn't think it was too much, since he had always been pretty daring to begin with. She had always been the one to end up embarrassed because of him.

...

Meanwhile, another profile picture lit up on Zu An's jade strip. It was the charming Zheng Dan this time. She seemed to have taken the picture from above, so Zu An could vaguely make out her bewitching cleavage.

When he saw the name 'Little Dirty Girl', Zu An immediately cursed inwardly.

*There doesn't seem to be many normal women among them at all...*

"Big brother Zu, what are you doing?"

When he saw her confident smile, Zu An couldn't help but feel warm inside. He replied, "I miss you."

"Tsk, you're probably flirting with other women."

"What do you mean? I'm chatting with you right now."

"I'm currently in the same bed as Little Qien, you know?"

Zu An was speechless. Even someone as thick-skinned as him was a bit embarrassed.

"Qienqien thinks I don't know, and she has her back to me, but she keeps sneaking guilty looks at me. Hmph, and she has no idea that the blinking light of the jade strip completely sold her out."

Zu An sighed when he saw that message. Thank goodness these two hadn't sent a message at the same time, or else he would really have committed social suicide without even knowing what happened. He asked, "Why are the two of you sleeping together?"

“Whose fault is it that you’re not here? She’s all cold and lonely, so only her sister-in-law can come to console her.”

The image of two young ladies huddled up together under the covers immediately appeared in Zu An’s mind. Imagining those two young and wonderful bodies hugging each other immediately made his heart rate speed up a bit.

“Are you thinking about something dirty now?” Zheng Dan sent.

“Of course not. I’m an upstanding and upright person, so how could I possibly be thinking about such things?”

“Oh. I was thinking of finding a chance to convince sister-in-law to do it together. Since you’re so upstanding and upright, then forget it.”

“Ahem, I admit that I spoke a bit too hastily just now.”

Just then, ‘Little Dirty Girl’ was changed to ‘North’. Zu An was completely confused.

“Big brother Zu, you should change your name to ‘Thousand’.”

“Why?” Zu An replied. He was really sweating now. Why did these women all want to have matching names? That was a one way ticket to death! He absolutely couldn’t mess with such things.

“Big brother Zu, I’ll be ‘North’ and you’ll be ‘Thousand’. That way, when the two of us are together, we’ll become ‘Obedient’.”[1]

Blood almost shot out of Zu An’s nose.

*This woman really is good at seducing others!*

Suddenly, a profile with the name ‘Ling’er’ flickered. The picture was of her sitting upright in front of a desk drawing runes. Her back was perfectly straight, giving her a scholarly air.

“Big brother Zu, are you there?”

Zu An couldn’t help but smile. These women were still a bit too underripe in their messaging skills. They were just like those young men who didn’t text

often, and would always ask women they liked if they were there. That way, it became really hard for them to start a proper conversation.

"Little sister Ling'er, your picture is quite pretty. Who helped you take it?"

Xie Daoyun, who was reading a book in front of a table, immediately felt her cheeks heat up when she heard his praise. She answered, "I had Xie Xiu help me. He wasn't willing at first, but when he saw this jade strip, he said he absolutely wanted one. I told him that it was really expensive and that it was hard to make another one, so he finally gave up on the thought."

If Xie Xiu were there, he would definitely start cursing on the spot. In order to take a satisfactory picture, his older sister had made him take a total of 1,827 pictures. Most of them were already quite perfect, but his big sister just hadn't been satisfied. There were even some pictures that clearly weren't very different at all, but his sister had just said that there was something wrong. He had really been about to break down that day.

"We're a bit short on the material right now, but I'll give him one once we do have enough," Zu An said. He had to admit that this picture of Xie Daoyun was really pretty. It was as if those sweet-tempered court ladies from books had really appeared in real life.

"Then I'll thank big brother Zu in his place. By the way, did everything go smoothly this time?"

"It went alright overall," Zu An said, although he felt a bit sad. If not for what happened with Honglei, everything would have been even better.

Xie Daoyun keenly sensed his dejected mood and asked considerately, "Big brother Zu, what happened? Is there anything that I can help with?"

At first, Zu An didn't want to talk about it, but when he sensed her gentle and considerate tone, he unwittingly began to say, "I did something that made Honglei upset. She decided to leave home, and I couldn't find her no matter what I did."

"Big brother Zu, Miss Qiu loves you so much. She'll come back after her anger subsides for sure."

"It's different this time. She might never be able to let this go for the rest of her life."



Xie Daoyun was stunned. She thought about asking him just what it was that was so serious, but in the end, she felt it would be considerate to ask and instead replied, "Time will heal everything." She added,

"Miss Qiu's cultivation is so high, too. Even if she's alone, nothing bad will happen to her."

...

When Zu An saw the messages come in slowly, he felt warm inside. His mood improved a bit too. He replied, "Thank you!"

Meanwhile, Xie Daoyun was a bit absentminded. She gently stroked the glass lamp on the table. This was a gift that big brother Zu had given her, something she liked a lot.

She suddenly sighed deeply. She had really wanted to ask about the kiss that happened last time in the secret dungeon, so why had she ended up helping him chase after another woman?

...

Just then, another profile flickered on Zu An's jade strip: 'Please Call Me Queen'. Zu An was speechless.

The profile picture seemed to be a selfie Liu Ning had taken in the hot spring. The spring water made her skin look incredibly smooth. Only a single shoulder of hers was exposed, and yet it was still so tempting.

Zu An planned to tease her a bit, but when he saw the message, his expression changed.

"Ah Zu, are you there? Something happened in the Fiend races' territory."

"What happened?" Zu An replied, shivering.

"It's great that you're there." Liu Ning's messages quickly appeared again. "Remember how I proposed for our countries' Empress Dowagers to meet and discuss the details of a collaboration? Some officials followed up on that, but then they received news that the Second Empress left the King Court in a hurry, and she seemed to have brought the King Court's most elite Golden Crow Guards with her."

“According to the intelligence we received, the sealed land seems to have experienced an accident, and she rushed over there with reinforcements.”

“What?!” Zu An’s eyes immediately narrowed.

1. This is a reference to how the character 乖 (obedient) is a combination of 北 (north) and 千 (thousand). It's likely a dirty play on words, since the 'thousand' is between the 'north'. ?

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Chapter 2025: Bewitched

Liu Ning quickly said, “The main army of the Second Prince vanished into thin air, but no monsters emerged from the sealed land. Of course, the Second Empress’ side wasn’t willing to risk anything, so she immediately headed over with her main army.”

“Is there any more information?” Zu An asked, finding the situation a bit strange. How could the Second Prince’s massive army disappear just like that? Besides, the monsters inside would normally have rushed out after they disappeared. The current situation seemed a bit off somehow.

“There’s nothing else. What should we do now?” Liu Ning asked.

“We need to gather reinforcements from our side as quickly as possible and be ready to head out to help at any time,” Zu An said, his expression grave. If no one was watching over the sealed land anymore, that would be a huge disaster.

“Alright,” Liu Ning said. She also understood the severity of the matter. If those monsters really crossed over and occupied the Fiend races' territory, it could pose a threat to the human race’s very existence. She added, “By the way, did you deal with the affairs on that side yet?”

“It’s almost done...” Zu An said, then gave her a summary of what happened at the Devil Sect.

Liu Ning clicked her tongue in wonder as she read the contents, replying, "Those monsters are no longer invading on a large scale, and are coming in secretly instead. It really is hard to guard against..."

"You're right," Zu An said. He was really worried too, but he couldn't think of any good methods. "I won't return to the capital, and will head straight to the north instead where the Fiend races' sealed land is, to see if I can minimize casualties."

"You have to be careful!" Liu Ning replied worriedly. Even though Zu An's cultivation was extremely powerful, that was only relative to the humans of this world. These were a foreign world's monsters they were dealing with here; they were all extremely powerful, with strange abilities that were almost impossible to prepare against.

When he sensed her concern, Zu An felt warm inside. He said, "Don't worry, I will."

"Sigh... I've been looking forward to your return and enjoying our time together, but this damned thing happened. It seems I won't be getting what I want for quite some time," Liu Ning remarked. At present, she was soaking in a bath. Her beautiful arms moved gently across the water, her fingertips running across her skin. When she thought back to the joy Zu An had brought her in the past, she unknowingly released a moan.

"I'll definitely return to the capital as quickly as I can," Zu An promised.

When he thought about Liu Ning's incredible beauty, and how with her new unique Empress Dowager identity, they could add even more tricks to their fun, he couldn't help but feel a flame burn within him too. Even so, he quickly calmed himself down. There were still more important affairs to take care of. He couldn't let himself be distracted by these feelings.

Meanwhile, there was someone else nearby who was infatuated with Liu Ning. Even though she was doing her best to suppress her moans, how could it escape the ears of Eunuch Lu outside? When he heard that voice, his entire body felt a bit limp. A hint of regret flashed through his eyes. It was a pity that the regent wasn't here, or else he would be able to feel refreshed again.

Suddenly, a lesser eunuch ran over. Eunuch Lu frowned and stopped him before taking him aside, hissing, "Do you not know the rules? No eunuchs are allowed to approach when the Empress Dowager is bathing."

The lesser eunuch smiled apologetically and said, "I naturally understand. Eunuch Lu is the only one in the entire palace who has this special honor. I actually came because I had something to report to Eunuch Lu."

Eunuch Lu frowned. He had some impression of this lesser eunuch. The latter had always been cowardly in the past, so why was he suddenly so calm and composed in front of him? When he thought of that, he didn't hesitate. He grabbed the lesser eunuch's neck with a hand like a falcon's claw.

Perhaps because the woman he adored since he was young had received the regent's nourishment, he was also greatly satisfied. As of late, his cultivation had made great progress, and he was even close to recovering the strength he had before he was crippled. Such a sudden assault on a lesser eunuch should have been extremely easy.

However, the lesser eunuch was able to mysteriously evade. A strange smile appeared on his face as he said, "Eunuch Lu is extremely careful as expected. You actually immediately noticed that there was something wrong with me."

"Who are you?" Eunuch Lu asked as he attacked again. This time, the lesser eunuch didn't dodge and allowed himself to be grabbed. Then, a blast of power erupted from Eunuch Lu's palm, sending destructive power into the lesser eunuch's body. Regardless of who it was, he would cripple them first, then interrogate them after.

The lesser eunuch's body cracked and rattled before going limp. Immediately after, a bowl-sized spider suddenly shot out from his lower back.

"The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider?" Eunuch Lu exclaimed, his expression changing. After the intelligence from the War Priest's invasion circulated, he had naturally learned about the monsters. Even so, its strength seemed to be a bit lacking.

"Wait, I came here today with sincerity!" The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider quickly showed its limbs in surrender while speaking with its mouth.

"What sincerity?" Eunuch Lu asked in surprise. He really couldn't figure out just what these monsters would want from him. It wasn't a bad idea to get some more intelligence from them first.

“During the time I spent inside this lesser eunuch, I was observing Eunuch Lu. I’ve developed a degree of understanding as to what Eunuch Lu likes,” the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider said with a grin.

Eunuch Lu’s expression changed. He prepared to attack.

The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider dodged backward while quickly saying, “Eunuch Lu, please don’t misunderstand! I didn’t come here to make fun of you, but rather to help you!”

“Help?” Eunuch Lu harrumphed. “How will you help me?”

“The reason why the eunuch has your fetish is because you have no choice. After all, a eunuch’s body is deficient. Unable to take action yourself, you can only entrust your feelings to another,” the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider explained, then offered, “But what if I could help you redevelop that part?”

At first, Eunuch Lu was furious. He was about to attack, but when he heard the last part, he was stunned. He asked, “What do you mean by 'redevelop'?”

The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider gave his lower body a look and said, “To turn you into a real man again, of course. The bodies of you humans are especially weak. Even if you cultivate to a high level and obtain stronger regeneration abilities, those are still too far lacking compared to what we monsters have.”

Eunuch Lu became quiet. In the past, his cultivation had been extremely high, so even if 'that' was removed, he could still recover. However, the eunuch selection of the palace was extremely strict, let alone the fact that someone as domineering as Zhao Han had always watched everything carefully. The palace had castrated him with a special method and drugs that forever crippled him.

The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider’s voice now carried a mysterious hint of allure as it said, “This might be impossible for your world, but for the monsters of our world, it poses no difficulty at all. Our tens of thousands of species of monsters all have powerful reproductive abilities. Helping you recover your fifth limb wouldn’t be hard at all. You would then become a true man, and you could do whatever your heart wished to the woman you love. That would bring you true joy! Wouldn’t that be much better than to entrust the deed and the joy to another man?”

Eunuch Lu was a bit moved. He asked, "Do you really have a way to help me recover my manhood?"

When it saw his reaction, the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider immediately revealed a pleased smile. After hiding in this world for some time, it had been able to grasp all kinds of weaknesses of human nature. This Eunuch Lu was indeed very loyal, and so any other method would never work. However, he would never refuse such a condition. It said, "Of course. For example, the Demonic Motherbug could just take a bit of your flesh and help you completely regrow that part. Then, it could use a special method to transplant it back to you. Wouldn't you be back to normal then? Don't worry, it would be made from your flesh, so it wouldn't be any different from your original part. Except, of course, for the fact that you'd become even stronger. You'd become a man among men."

When he heard its description, Eunuch Lu began breathing quickly. He asked, "Then why are you helping me?" He knew that there were no free lunches in this world.

Sure enough, the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider said, "I've been trying to find a way to get more of my companions into the bodies of the lesser eunuchs and maids. Since the selection process is quite strict, I need your help to get through the inspections and give them enough time to develop."

Eunuch Lu's expression changed. That would mean that one day, the entire Imperial Palace would fall under the control of these monsters.

As if seeing through his misgivings, that Heart-Devouring Demon Spider said, "Don't worry, we need a human representative too, and we won't touch the woman you like. You can remain perfect partners."

Eunuch Lu sighed in relief, saying, "Alright. How will your companions come over? How should I work with you?"

When it saw him agree, the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider cackled. Sure enough, everything was going as planned.

Most of what it said was the truth. The only lie was that the 'thing' created by the Demonic Motherbug would also have the traits of the Demonic Motherbug. As long as Eunuch Lu entered the empress dowager's body, it would pour the Demonic Motherbug's seeds into her body. In that case, no matter how high the empress dowager's cultivation was, she would be doomed to

demonification. Furthermore, the empress dowager was one of the most influential people in this world. By controlling her, all of their plans would become much easier.

The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider moved closer to Eunuch Lu and whispered quietly, "That's simple. You just need to..."

Eunuch Lu nodded continuously as he listened. Suddenly, his hand shot out as fast as lightning and grabbed its body.

Right before its death, the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider murmured with a look of disbelief, "Why..."

A hint of redness flashed through Eunuch Lu's eyes as he said, "You fool. Compared to obtaining Ning'er, I enjoy the feeling of the most powerful man ravaging the woman I like much more. How could you possibly understand the beauty of that?"

The Heart-Devouring Demon Spider's eyes widened as it exploded.

*It's not that I was incompetent, but that I never expected there to be such a strange and perverted human!*

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Chapter 2026: Return

A figure darted in from the courtyard. Liu Ning had sensed the activity and rushed over. Perhaps because of how hurried she was, she only had a single robe around her. Her still-wet skin made the robe damp, and it clung to her skin. Even though she didn't really show anything, her amazing curves were still incredible.

Eunuch Lu gave her a look and lowered his head immediately after. His heart was pounding as he said, "A Heart-Devouring Demon Spider invaded just now and was killed by this servant."

"Heart-Devouring Demon Spider?" Liu Ning repeated as her expression changed. She saw the tattered lesser eunuch corpse in the corner and the

spider corpse on the other side, remarking, "I never expected these spiders to have even infiltrated the palace."

"There shouldn't be too many. This servant already obtained some clues and will quickly eliminate the rest," Eunuch Lu said respectfully.

Liu Ning was a bit surprised. She asked, "Oh? How did you get new information? Also, these Heart-Devouring Demon Spiders are always well hidden. How did you find this one?"

Eunuch Lu knew that she was full of doubts. If he didn't explain things clearly, she could start suspecting him. That was why he told her roughly what had just happened.

Liu Ning's brows moved slightly. She looked at him with a strange expression and asked, "You didn't even agree to such conditions?" To be honest, if she were in his place, even she didn't know if she would be able to refuse.

Eunuch Lu sighed and said, "If I had been given these conditions twenty years ago, I might have just agreed. But now... As long as you're happy, I'm already more than satisfied and can't ask for anything more. Besides, these monsters are incredibly cunning and definitely have traps hidden in their conditions. How could I afford to let you experience even the slightest bit of risk?"

When she heard that, Liu Ning couldn't help but feel a bit moved too. She stared at him for a while before asking, "Why would you go that far?"

Eunuch Lu revealed a sad smile and said, "I've already regretted letting you down back then all my life. How can I disappoint you a second time? Besides that, this matter is related to the safety of the entire human race. Could I do something that would bring down the entire human race because of my own selfish desires?"

Liu Ning thought for a bit, then bowed toward him. She said with a serious expression, "Compared to other men, you are one with a true indomitable spirit!"

When he heard what she said, Eunuch Lu's eyes shone brightly. He said, "Being able to hear these words from you has already made this humble one's life worth living." His mood was really great right now. He left behind a string of laughter as he said, "I must eliminate these monsters that might be hiding in



the palace as quickly as possible, or else they'll alert each other of their companions' deaths and escape."

As she watched him leave, Liu Ning's expression became extremely complicated. After all these years, Eunuch Lu had finally recovered his high-spirited self from their youth.

*Even so, fate loves to toy with people...*

...

Meanwhile, over by the Lake of Hatred, Zu An immediately sought out Yun Jianyue.

After Yun Jianyue opened the door, her expression was a bit strange. She asked, "Why did you come here again? If you want that, go and ask that subordinate with the long legs. I'm not gonna keep you company." She was seriously injured and weak right now. After his treatment, even though she looked fine on the surface, her body was terribly sore and had almost broken down from it all. How could she still stand another round of tossing and turning?

Zu An was speechless.

*So in her eyes, I was that kind of person?*

"I have important matters..." he began. Then, he told her about the information he had just received.

At first, Yun Jianyue was a bit embarrassed, but as she listened, her expression became increasingly grave. She said, "If something happens to the sealed land, things could turn ugly fast. I didn't expect the monsters to have already come up with new tricks."

The Holy Sect had just experienced this disaster, but what was happening on the Fiend races' side was even more severe. If the sealed land were opened up, countless monsters would be able to cross over without any restrictions. The entire world could even face the threat of extinction.

"Do you have to go to the sealed land immediately?" Yun Jianyue asked.

Zu An nodded, saying, "That's right. I can't stay here for too long. I might have to entrust dealing with Honglei to you."

When she heard the regret in his voice, Yun Jianyue nodded and said, "Don't worry, I'll find her. If she learns of the whole story, she won't blame you either."

Zu An sighed. With this separation, who knew how long it would be before he could see Honglei again?

He then asked, "Right, has Lu Sanyuan's faction been cleaned out yet? How about I help you out a bit before I leave?"

Yun Jianyue shook her head and said, "There's no need. Only Lu Sanyuan's disciple Ding Xia is missing. Everyone else is already under control."

When she said that, she couldn't help but say with a sigh, "It's really a pity. Lu Sanyuan was indeed a genius. The two of us were a team, one taking care of matters regarding the world of warriors, and the other dealing with the volunteer army. And yet, he just had to let matters of the past get to him for so long. If I had known about this, I would have told him the truth back then."

Zu An was stunned. He recalled what Lu Sanyuan had said before he passed away. He asked, "Are there still other secrets I don't know about from back then?"

Yun Jianyue explained, "In the past, his master and mine were known as a golden couple in the sect. The two also shared feelings for each other, but they never expected that the Unfeeling Path's skills would be too cruel. If they wanted to reach the highest level, they had to first love someone, then personally kill the one they loved. Only then would they reach the apex.

"But during their battle, a few Heavenly Devil School experts helped my master. In the end, his master wasn't able to win and was defeated by mine. For the sake of his reputation, we didn't declare the real reason to the outside world. Who could have known that his disciple Lu Sanyuan would harbor hard feelings and think that his master died because of our Heavenly Devil School's people?"

Zu An chuckled and said, "The past is in the past. To be honest, as a regent of the court, if you guys were to come up with another rebel army to face the court, I would have a bit of a headache. I care about both sides equally."

“Who wants you to care about them?” Yun Jianyue replied in annoyance. “However, now that the monsters of the other world have invaded, the human race is in a crisis. Our Holy Sect’s disciples wouldn’t act without any regard for the bigger situation. From today forth, we naturally have to work together against the foreign monsters and can’t waste time fighting among ourselves.”

“That’s the best way,” Zu An said, then held her tightly in his arms.

When she felt the strength of his arms, Yun Jianyue, after some hesitation, still hugged him again. All her hopes had turned to dust when Honglei saw her. She had already thought about how she would completely leave Zu An. That was why she had agreed to everything, because she thought that it was going to be the last time anyway. And yet, when she sensed his warm hug and his strong affection, she was a bit at a loss. Could she really leave him?

...

Zu An then returned to his room. He called out to Zhang Zitong, “I have something to take care of and have to go. The two of us will part ways here. Go where you need to go.”

Zhang Zitong rubbed her drowsy eyes. The sudden news made her feel as if her heartstrings were being tugged. She immediately became clear-headed and asked, “Can I return to the Embroidery House?”

Zu An was stunned. He hadn’t expected her to say that. He asked, “Don’t you know the Embroidered Envoy’s rules? Someone like you who has already betrayed the organization once will only have death awaiting you once you go back.”

Zhang Zitong replied, “If Chief Commander Zhuxie Chixin were still there, I would never dare to return. But sir is now the boss, so I’m still willing to return.”

Zu An was speechless.

Zhang Zitong continued, “I’ve already paid back the favor I owe the organization behind me, so now I can be wholly devoted to sir’s work. I definitely won’t betray you again.”

Zu An said with a frown, "Words are useless for these kinds of things. You should know that in our line of work, we never use anyone with even the slightest stain again."

Zhang Zitong clenched her teeth, saying, "If sir is still not convinced, you can feed me a poison and just treat me once a year."

Zu An asked in confusion, "Why are you so determined to come back?"

"Does sir want to hear the truth or a lie?" Zhang Zitong replied as she looked at him.

Zu An said with a sneer, "There's no need for you to play these games with me."

Zhang Zitong then said, "The lie is that I've become used to life in the Embroidered Envoy and don't know what else to do. The truth is..." She paused for a moment, then looked at Zu An with her large eyes, continuing, "I like being at sir's side."

Zu An was stunned. He had never expected it to be this answer! He immediately refused, saying, "I have no interest in women right now."

Zhang Zitong exclaimed in shock, "Could it be that sir likes men?"

Zu An was speechless. He did his best to suppress his rage and said, "The monsters are invading and a great disaster is about to descend. How could I still have the time to worry about things like feelings?"

"Sir is different from the past Chief Commander Zhuxie after all; you care much more about the fate of mankind. As expected of the one I admire," Zhang Zitong said as she stuck out her chest. "Don't worry, sir, I definitely won't hold you back. I'll fight side by side with sir against the monsters!"

Zu An thought to himself for a bit, then said, "Fine. In that case, you should just return to the Embroidery House. However, you won't have your status as silver token envoy anymore. Just work your way up from bronze again."

He was lacking manpower to begin with, and he wanted to find out what exactly was going on with the organization behind her. Even though she could be a spy, as long as he used her well, she could very well become his double agent.

“Am I going to be a bronze token envoy at sir’s side?” Zhang Zitong asked weakly.

Zu An voiced his agreement. It was safer to keep someone dangerous like this right under his watch.

Zhang Zitong jumped up excitedly and exclaimed, “Thank you, sir!” She looked so excited that, if not for of her misgivings toward his usual prestige, perhaps she would have just given him a few kisses.

Zu An took out a scroll of paper and quickly wrote on it. Then, he put his seal on it before saying, “Once you return, look for Xiao Jianren. He’ll assign you appropriately.”

Zhang Zitong’s face immediately fell. She replied, “Ah? I can’t go with sir?”

“Of course not!” Zu An said with a frown. He was going to the Fiend races’ territory and could end up having to expose his real identity. How could he let her tag along?

When she saw his firm attitude, Zhang Zitong replied with an ‘oh’ and admitted her fate. Even so, the fact that she had been accepted by him was still something to be happy about.

Then, Zu An took Zhang Zitong out of the Lake of Hatred. Otherwise, it would be a bit dangerous to leave her there all alone. He warned her before they separated, “Right, once you go back, don’t tell anyone else anything about the Lake of Hatred.”

“Got it,” Zhang Zitong said, although she had a gossipy look in her eyes.

*It seems like sir and the Devil Sect’s witch have quite the special relationship!*

Zu An didn’t feel like explaining and flew into the sky by himself.

“He even flies so handsomely,” Zhang Zitong said, her face red. Her long legs inadvertently swung back and forth. Her mood was clearly really good right now.

...

After Zu An left the Lake of Hatred, he got on the Wind Fire Wheels and sped off to the north. After an unknown amount of time passed, he looked down at

the snowy mountains beneath him. He was briefly absentminded. Why did it feel as if the Great Snowy Mountain was a bit colder than when he had been there in the past?

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#### Chapter 2027: Rumors

Zu An thought back to the things that had happened on the Great Snowy Mountain. Back then, they had even been chased by a mysterious and powerful snow lady.

If one wanted to live, the whole Great Snowy Mountain region seemed like a forbidden place. It was full of all kinds of mysteries and legends. Now, however, there was naturally no need for him to fear that snow lady who pursued him last time.

Zu An had even considered taking a look around the Great Snowy Mountain and exploring this mysterious place. However, he always had something new he had to do. He hadn't expected that the next time he would be crossing over the Great Snowy Mountain would be in this kind of situation. Now, even though he was in the air, he could still sense the unique chill of the region. Even the Wind Fire Wheels' flames became much weaker.

"It is indeed quite a bit colder than before," he muttered.

There was a blistering sun in the sky; normally, he would have expected the area to be warmer than last time. The cold left him a bit confused. Nobody in the past thousand years had ever heard of Great Snowy Mountain's temperature changing, right? Could it be that something had happened there? Even so, the situation with the sealed land was too urgent, so he really didn't want to waste any time. Despite his puzzlement, in the end, he still didn't stop and continued to fly north instead.

After flying for a while longer, Zu An suddenly sensed something. He took out his recording mirror. The surface was flickering in a certain pattern. He knew that no one would use such a device unless it was extremely urgent, so he ignored the ki stone expenditure and quickly threw in a dozen or so heaven-grade ki stones. Soon after, the surface rippled. Dressed in her empress dowager formal wear, Liu Ning appeared.

“Regent, I couldn't contact you with the jade strip, so I used the recording mirror,” Liu Ning said while sitting upright and still.

Zu An took out the jade strip and gave it a look. Sure enough, there was no other information. As expected, it wasn't a reliable way for instant communication.

“What does the empress dowager need?” Zu An also replied respectfully. The fact that she had addressed him in such a proper manner meant there were others around her. That meant there were some things that naturally couldn't be said.

“This morning, I received a formal request for assistance from the Fiend King Court. Something has happened to the sealed land, and they hope we can respect our prior agreement and send reinforcements to aid in the eradication of the foreign monsters,” Bi Linglong's voice added. She naturally walked over to Liu Ning's side and appeared in the image as well. She looked deeply at Zu An.

“The situation has already worsened to this degree, huh,” Zu An said with a frown. Even though he had discussed gathering reinforcements with Liu Ning, that was just preparation for when they would need it in the future. After all, whether it was the Fiend races or the human race, they each had their pride. If they could deal with it themselves, there was no way they would ever ask the other side for help. And yet, the Fiend races were now asking the human race for help through official channels. They were clearly pressured to the point that they had no other choice.

“Alright, let's organize the reinforcement army as quickly as possible. I'm rushing to the Fiend races' territory myself. I'll help with the coordination on that side,” Zu An quickly replied. However, he was a bit confused. Why hadn't the Second Empress contacted him at all from her side? He thought of something and asked, “Empress Dowager, empress, did the Fiend races' request for reinforcements come from the Second Empress herself?”

Liu Ning shook her head and replied, “That did not happen. It was something the Elf King told us through the recording mirror. He said that something bad had happened to the sealed land and that the Second Empress set out in the night, leading the Golden Crow Guards to provide reinforcements. That matches the secret intelligence we received on our side.”

That handsome older man appeared in Zu An's mind. He couldn't help but sigh. The Elf King was still someone trustworthy - his father-in-law, Snow's father.

*It seems the Second Empress was in such a rush that she didn't have time to contact me.*

"Have you already selected people to go on this mission?" Zu An asked.

"Normally, the Qin clan's two dukes would have been the best candidates, but they still have their prior injuries and cannot recover in time. Eventually, after compromises from each side, we decided that King Liang Zhao Yi would be the commander-in-chief and lead the reinforcements north," Bi Linglong replied.

"King Liang?" Zu An repeated with a frown. That guy was the late emperor's uncle, but in reality, he was a useless nobody. He had shown off his military strength in Brightmoon City, but in the eyes of a true expert, his bit of cultivation wasn't anything at all.

Even so, he could guess a few things from Bi Linglong's words. It seemed that the empress' faction definitely wouldn't allow the Liu clan's trusted aides to take on such a crucial authoritative role. Furthermore, the Empress Dowager's faction didn't want anyone from the Bi clan to be the commander-in-chief either. That was why both sides had compromised and chosen King Liang, a member of the Imperial clan. Even though his cultivation and intelligence were quite ordinary, he had the qualifications and a certain degree of prestige.

Liu Ning seemed to have seen through his worries and said, "There is no need for regent to be worried. The court has already discussed things. Once the army is brought to the Fiend races' territory, the authority of command will be yours. He will at most be a military supervisor."

Zu An nodded slightly. That wasn't a bad idea, or else the entire army would collapse because of a worthless commander. As for King Liang becoming a military supervisor, that was clearly also insurance set up by the court. After all, this main army was advancing into the Fiend races' territory, and he was also the regent of the Fiend races. There were definitely some worries that he would collude with the Fiend races to entrap the army.

Just then, Bi Linglong spoke up, saying, "The Qin clan's younger generation eagerly enlisted, seemingly with the goal of regaining their clan's glory. Also,



many disciples from the academy also signed up, especially when they heard that you were on that side. They are all eager to fight side by side with you. Should we agree or reject them?"

Zu An reflexively wanted to talk about the dangers of the sealed land, but after thinking about it, if those from other clans wanted to go, but the ones he was close to didn't, what would outsiders think? The army's very morale could even be shaken. Besides, unpolished gems could never truly display their beauty. Only after true battles could they grow faster.

As such, he eventually said gravely, "Tell them of the danger clearly. If there are still people who insist on going, agree to their enlistment."

Bi Linglong nodded slightly and said, "I understand."

Off to the side, Liu Ning gave her a surprised look.

*This lass always acts overbearing and arrogant when she talks to me, but in front of Ah Zu, she's acting like a young married woman! Tsk tsk tsk, Ah Zu really knows how to deal with women.*

Zu An discussed some more details regarding the court with the two ladies, then hung up the call reluctantly.

Then, he tried to contact the Second Empress' recording mirror, but there was no reply. An uncomfortable feeling crept up within him. If she had been in too much of a rush to gather her troops and support the sealed land, giving her no opportunity to contact him, that was one thing. But now, he was the one calling her, and yet she still didn't have time to even pick up the call. That meant the situation had already reached a certain degree of severity. Or... Something had already happened to her.

Previously, he hadn't been able to contact Yun Jianyue through the recording mirror, and sure enough, something big had happened to her. If not for him arriving promptly on time, she could have already passed on.

*The Second Empress' side... I hope I can make it!*

He urged the Wind Fire Wheels on at full strength, not caring about his own ki reserves anymore. They immediately became four times faster. Just like that, he traveled day and night without rest at all.

He soon passed over the Snake race's territory. After thinking about it, he went in to ask about the situation. It wasn't surprising to find out that Yu Yanluo wasn't there, though. The Snake race's elders said that the Second Empress had gathered all of the experts of the different races to go to the sealed land. Their clan leader had been one of the first to respond, taking the strong individuals of the clan, including Little White and Little Blue, with her.

Even Yu Yanluo had gone...

Zu An tried to contact Yu Yanluo through the recording mirror, but he couldn't contact her. He became more and more anxious. He couldn't be bothered with the Snake race's enthusiastic requests for him to stop for the night. He didn't even take a sip of tea before continuing on his way.

...

After flying for a while longer, Zu An at the familiar palace below and entered a brief trance. It turned out he had already arrived at Bluefield Country, the land full of foxes. In the past, these skies were precisely where he had shared a beautiful memory with the Bluefield Country Master, Tushan Yu.

Suddenly, a huge bird flew out from the palace below, with a beautiful woman on it. Her face was delicate and pretty, and her hair fluttered in the wind behind her. Her faint blue dress made her look youthful and pure, but her foxy eyes seemed to tug right at the soul. Together with the shaggy hair moving in the wind behind her, she woman managed to perfectly combine the contrasting feelings of purity and seduction.

"May I ask which senior has arrived... Regent!" Tushan Yu exclaimed. She had initially been a bit scared, but when she saw who it was, she was pleasantly surprised.

Zu An reached out his hand, and a gentle force took her into his arms. He exclaimed, "It's been too long!"

Tushan Yu got on her toes and immediately kissed him. She reluctantly let him go, her face a bit red as she asked, "Did you come because of the sealed land?"

"You know about it as well?" Zu An asked, then tried to gain more information.

"The king court issued an order from the Second Empress, for the clan leaders to lead their elites to the sealed land as reinforcements. She said that the Fiend races have already reached the point of imminent destruction. Our Bluefield Country isn't good at fighting, and our skills are useless against those monsters too, so we didn't need to go to the front lines. We stayed behind to take care of some logistical matters," Tushan Yu replied.

Zu An was shocked. The Second Empress had actually described it as imminent destruction! He asked, "Do you know what happened at the sealed land?"

Tushan Yu frowned and replied, "There are a lot of rumors. Some say that the Second Prince was bewitched by the monsters and betrayed the Fiend races. Others say that the Second Prince wasn't happy with fighting endlessly in the sealed land, and his men coerced him to flee. There are some who say the Second Prince has already died in battle... There are all kinds of rumors, and it's hard to discern truth from lies. There's only one thing we know for certain, which is that something did happen around the sealed land."

Zu An frowned and asked, "Did the court leave behind a monitoring army?"

They were all smart people. In the past, the Second Prince had been ordered to head to the sealed land precisely for him to exhaust his elite troops. The Fiend King Court had definitely been on guard against him as well, so they would have left behind some forces to watch that army's rear lines. If something strange happened then, they would be able to react immediately.

"There was no news from that army at all, as if all of them had vanished into thin air," Tushan Yu replied.

Zu An frowned. It seemed the situation was even more grave than he had imagined.

He asked for some more details, then took out the Fiend races' regent seal. He wrote some documents and handed them to Tushan Yu, saying, "The humans' reinforcements are about to head north. Take this order from me and have the guards at the checkpoint let them pass. At the same time, prepare military provisions."

Tushan Yu's expression became serious as she said, "I will definitely carry out your orders!"

At the same time, the way she looked at him became even sweeter. At first, she had been worried that he only treated her as a toy, but he was actually willing to have her speak on his behalf, which meant that wasn't the case at all.

...

Meanwhile, in the human race's capital, Xie Daoyun was getting worked up from arguing with Xie Xiu. She protested, "Absolutely not! You are the only son of the Xie clan; I won't let you go to the sealed land!"

"Aren't you the only daughter of our clan? If even you can go, why can't I?" Xie Xiu replied with a big smile.

"I am a woman, so of course it's different!" Xie Daoyun looked at her younger brother while huffing angrily. "It would be one thing if a brat like you who only knows how to play around all day went, but this is a matter of principle. Absolutely not!"

Xie Xiu sighed and said, "Foreign monsters are invading, and the world is on the verge of extinction. I, Xie Xiu, might be called a pretty boy sissy by other men who are jealous of me, but I am also a proper man! How can I hide in fear at a time like this?"

Xie Daoyun said with a stiff expression, "Father and mother aren't here right now, and I can't let you cause trouble. I am enough to represent the Xie clan."

Xie Xiu said with a smile, "Then let's talk about it in a way you can understand. So many academy disciples have applied to fight the enemy with their libationer. There are many female disciples among them. If I acted too fearful of death and stay behind, my reputation would be soured. How would I continue to chase after women in the future?"

Xie Daoyun was speechless.

...

Similar scenes were playing out amid the capital's various clans.

Inside the Regent manor, Qin Wanru slammed the table and stood up. She cried, "No, absolutely not! Youzhao, you are not allowed to go!"

Meanwhile, Chu Youzhao immediately panicked, exclaiming, "Why? Even little sister Qinghe can go!"

Qin Wanru was really nervous. She said, "Our Chu clan has placed all its hopes in you. If something happens to you, what are your parents supposed to do then? What will everyone from the Chu clan do?"

In the past, in order for the Brightmoon Duke's noble title to be smoothly passed down, they had used underhanded means and gone through so much effort to raise Chu Youzhao. How could they let all of that be ruined because of this event?!

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## **Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2028: Sisters Who Share a Father, but Different Mothers**

Chapter 2028: Sisters Who Share a Father, but Different Mothers

"I can't just hide under your wing forever, right?" Chu Youzhao retorted, her face completely red. "Besides, brother-in-law is over there! He can protect me."

"There are so many people who need protecting on the battlefield. How could he tend to you? What if there's an oversight and..." Qin Wanru trailed off, alarmed just from the thought alone. She frowned and said, "We can discuss anything else, just not this."

Chu Youzhao wanted to say something else, but Murong Qinghe said from off to the side, "Big brother Chu, what the madam says is reasonable. The north is bitterly cold and far, and it's too dangerous. You've never experienced life in the army, so it'll be even more dangerous for you than other people."

Chu Youzhao said resentfully, "So you were also looking down on me, little sister Qinghe."

Off to the side, Chu Huanzhao couldn't help but roll her eyes. "Do you really have no awareness of your own cultivation rank? You'll only be putting more trouble on brother-in-law's plate by going."

Chu Youzhao was furious, retorting, "My cultivation is at least higher than yours!"

Chu Huanzhao said disdainfully, "That's only because in the past, I didn't spend that much time on cultivation. You've seen my cultivation speed recently. Have I not been beating you up until you started hollering for mom and dad?"

"What?!" Chu Youzhao exclaimed, gritting her teeth in anger. "Do you have no sense of shame? It was clearly brother-in-law who helped you increase your cultivation aptitude!"

"It's not as if he didn't help you raise your aptitude too, but my cultivation speed is clearly faster than yours," Chu Huanzhao said worriedly.

Murong Qinghe watched the two of them fight with a smile.

*Siblings like them are so great. It's not like the Murong clan where the brothers and sisters are more courteous and distant from each other.*

In the end, after all of their persuasion, Chu Youzhao could only give up on thoughts of signing up. She still warned Murong Qinghe, "Little sister Qinghe, you have to be careful. Once you get to the front lines, you have to get in touch with my brother-in-law. He'll definitely take care of you!"

"O... Okay." Murong Qinghe said, avoiding eye contact a bit.

*How could I still look for him after the embarrassing message I sent him last time?*

*Big brother Zu seems to have a thing for me... but I can't let down big brother Chu.*

...

Compared to the capital's liveliness, the Devil Sect's Lake of Hatred was much less enthusiastic. After going through Lu Sanyuan's battle against the monsters, the Holy Sect was already greatly weakened. Furthermore, after the subsequent departures of Qiu Honglei and Zu An, Yun Jianyue wasn't in a great mood. The other sect masters could tell as well, so the overall mood was a bit gloomy.

Yun Jianyue muttered to herself, "Brightmoon City is the place Honglei stayed in the longest, and that was where she met him too. Could it be that she ran all the way back there?" She shook her head and said, "No way, she's probably really hurt this time. Why would she go to that kind of place to feel even more annoyed?"

She thought of many possible locations, but they were rejected one after another. In the end, she got more and more annoyed and was also at a loss. She had no idea where to find Qiu Honglei.

Suddenly, a subordinate reported, "Sect master, there is someone who wishes to meet with your respected self."

"Who?" Yun Jianyue asked with a frown.

"He said he was from the Yun clan of the north," the subordinate replied.

Yun Jianyue's expression changed as she said, "Let him in."

Soon after, a middle-aged man was brought to the entrance. He had decent features, clearly having been a handsome man in his youth. Yun Jianyue waved her hand, gesturing for her subordinates to withdraw.

"The north's Yun Shou greets the sect master!" the middle-aged man said with a bow.

"How were you able to find this place?" Yun Jianyue asked, looking at him coldly. The Lake of Hatred was a place of utmost secrecy. In all these years, not even the Embroidered Envoy had been able to find it.

The middle-aged man said with a smile, "We were able to bring the sect master here in the past, so sending one person here is of no difficulty."

Yun Jianyue's expression changed and she said, "I already have no connection to that place."

That middle-aged man named Yun Shou shook his head and replied, "How can a bloodline relationship be so easily broken?"

Yun Jianyue said with a sneer, "In the past, I was nothing more than a bastard child of a lowly woman. How could I possibly have the right to mingle with the noble aristocrats of the Yun clan?"

Yun Shou's expression remained gentle as he said, "The sect master speaks too harshly. The Yun clan valued you greatly in the past, and they tried to find a way to bring you to the late Devil Sect master. Do you really think you would have been able to become her disciple so easily without us working behind the scenes?"

"Hah," Yun Jianyue said with a cold expression. "You're bringing up things from decades ago that may or may not have happened, and you want me to feel grateful to you? Aren't you underestimating me too much here? Do you think I'm that easy to fool?"

Yun Shou sighed and said, "Whether or not it really did happen, that is something Sect Master Yun understands fully well. In the past, the Devil Sect's trials were all exceedingly dangerous. You were still young back then and didn't have high enough cultivation. On several occasions, you almost died. If not for the secret help you received, how could you have been able to safely grow up and eventually sit in your position of sect master?"

Yun Jianyue became quiet. Several memories of her youth surfaced. She had always been curious as to how she was able to pass, and later, she had only thought of it as her luck being good. Now, it seemed to have been because of the help of the Yun clan. These were things that no one else in the Devil Sect knew about, and she had never talked about it either. There was no way one would know without being involved.

"So what if it happened or not? Don't tell me you would naively think that this was enough to threaten me to repay you?" Yun Jianyue eventually retorted with a sneer. As the leader of the Devil Sect for all these years, she was already used to dancing on the brink of life and death. She wasn't a naive little girl who could be easily manipulated.

"I wouldn't dare," Yun Shou said with a bow. "This humble one only wished to come to discuss some old things. We wouldn't dare to threaten you." He then continued, "Does the sect master know of our northern Yun clan's background?"

Yun Jianyue frowned, saying, "Not interested."

Yun Shou ignored what she said and continued, "The rest of the world only knows us as a clan that thrived in the north for centuries, but few people know that we are actually a branch of the Demon race."



Yun Jianyue's expression finally changed. If the Yun clan was part of the Demon race, didn't that mean she too had been part of them from the very start?

Yun Shou was very satisfied with her reaction. He said, "Among the Fiend races, forget about the Golden Crow Imperial Clan; let alone the Ocean races that reside in the vast sea, whose contact with the Fiend races is actually very sparse. The remaining Demon, Golden Peng, Peacock, and Elf races were deemed the four great king races. Their statuses in the Fiend races are extraordinary.

"On top of that, the Demon race is also divided into four great clans: The Yun, Suolun, Rong, and Wu clan, with our Yun clan taking the lead. For more than two-thirds of the existence of the Demon race, it has been led by the Yun clan.

"In the past, the Fiend races fought a huge battle with the humans. The Fiend races were unfortunately defeated, but we still yearned for the day when we could return to our homeland and seize back the world from the humans. That was why we sent some of our people into the human territory to start inhabiting it and multiplying. Meanwhile, the northern Yun clan is precisely what the Demon race prepared on this side."

As he spoke of the clan's history, his face was full of pride.

Yun Jianyue smiled ambiguously and replied, "So? Do you want me to welcome the Demon race back to their former homeland?"

She was starting to recover from her initial shock now. Even if she had Demon race blood, so what? Just how many years had already passed? It was no doubt quite faint now. If these naive bastards really wanted to vainly use that to threaten her, they'd die without even knowing how.

Yun Shou shook his head slightly and said, "It is still not time. There is no need for the sect master to take such a huge risk."

Yun Jianyue frowned, asking, "Then why did you come to see me?"

Yun Shou sized her up, seemingly considering what to say. He then replied, "We hope that the sect master can go and help out your little sister."

“Little sister?” Yun Jianyue repeated, raising her brows as if she had heard an incredible joke. “I was an only daughter, so when did I ever have a little sister?”

Yun Shou sighed, saying, “Sect Master Yun’s resentment is an understandable part of human nature. In the past, your father ended up loving a human and siring you. The clan felt that your bloodline wasn’t pure enough, so they didn’t treat you well from the start. That was why you were sent to such a dangerous Devil Sect. However, they never expected you to have been able to grow to this extent. Recently, you were actually even able to influence the selection of the new Fiend Emperor in the Fiend King Court.”

Yun Jianyue knew that he was talking about the time she and Yan Xuehen had helped Zu An single-handedly raise up the weaker Second Empress, allowing her son to become the new Fiend Emperor. Now that they were on the topic, she had fought alongside the Demon race’s people in the past too. She seemed to recall a pretty young lady named Princess Suolun, who probably didn’t know about her relationship with the Demon race either.

“As for your little sister’s mother, she was a distinguished member of the Demon race. After all, a child born between the two of them would more readily awaken the bloodline power of the Yun clan. As such, the clan treated her better at first, and then through certain means, helped her achieve the title of Madam Wu,” Yun Shou said.

“Isn’t Madam Wu doing fine? She’s definitely living a far better life than someone like me, a rebel in the court’s eyes,” Yun Jianyue said with a calm expression.

Yun Shou was a bit surprised, remarking, “You don’t seem to be surprised that she is your little sister.”

Yun Jianyue said with a sneer, “It’s not as if I never investigated this myself. Of course that heartless and fickle father of mine married another woman and had another daughter. It’s just that I never expected to have such a degree of connection to the Demon race.”

Yun Shou sighed, saying, “Then you should now understand the relationship between us and the Demon race. You should understand your father’s troubles in the past, right?”

Yun Jianyue swept out her sleeves and said, "I don't care about any of his troubles; I only know that he is heartless and fickle. He left my mother and allowed her to pass away. Thank goodness he died early too, or else I would even consider going out to get revenge for my mother."

Yun Shou said, "In the past, your father passed away so early precisely because he was always brooding over your mother's situation."

When she heard that, there was no emotional reaction on Yun Jianyue's face at all.

Yun Shou then said, "Even though you and Yun Yuqing are not from the same mother, you share a father. If the two of you could watch over each other, that would be wonderful."

"Just what happened to her?" Yun Jianyue asked. She wasn't that interested, but after thinking about it, using this as a pretext to get some information was fine as well.

Yun Shou was delighted to hear her response, saying, "She isn't actually in any danger. Rather, the empress and empress dowager are fighting fiercely and trying to rope in powers..."

Yun Jianyue sneered and said, "Those two can fight all they want, but in the end, isn't it all Ah... the regent who has the last say?"

"Be that as it may, the regent Zu An comes from a humble background and doesn't actually have many people at his side. The implementation of many government decrees still has to go through either the empress or empress dowager's people to implement. As such, for the sake of their respective interests, of course they have to fight," Yun Shou explained. "Also, according to the intelligence we received, the regent seems to only have interest in women and cultivation. He doesn't care much for authority in the court at all."

Yun Jianyue was speechless.

*That bastard Ah Zu's perversion has already become a globally known fact.*

Yun Shou continued, "Under such a premise, neither of the two ladies wishes to lose to the other. They both want to become the woman with the greatest authority in the court. Not only is that their own desire, it also represents the

clans behind them, as well as the collective vision of the ministers who have followed them all this time.

“As of late, both sides have been trying to rope in the kings that rule over various fiefdoms. King Wu is one of these important individuals. He has been invited to the capital. He always had wild ambitions to begin with. As Zhao Han’s son, he naturally wishes to seize it all. He has realized that this is a great opportunity and plans to see if he can take advantage of the crisis for personal gain.”

Yun Jianyue thought about what had happened during the past few days. There seemed to be many princes fighting over the throne, and Ah Zu had even killed one. It seemed that brat King Wu really didn't want to live anymore.

Yun Shou said, “Even though King Wu’s forces aren’t bad, they still aren't enough to subdue the masses. However, if he can receive the help of you and the Devil Sect, his chances of success will become a bit higher.

“Furthermore, because your relationship with the regent seems to be especially good, we hope that you can speak favorably about King Wu. Otherwise, if King Wu accidentally makes a mistake and angers him, there won't be a chance to carry out the plan in time.”

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Chapter 2029: Sealed Land

Yun Jianyue’s heart was beating crazily. Could it be that he already knew about her relationship with Ah Zu?

*If he uses that to threaten me, things will become a bit tricky...*

As if seeing through her confusion, Yun Shou said with a smile, “These humans might not know the truth, but how can we not know? Previously, in the Fiend King Court, you and the regent fought side by side, so your relationship is extremely good. As such, it shouldn’t be too big of a deal for him to keep an eye out for your brother-in-law, right?”

Yun Jianyue was speechless.

Yun Shou continued, "Didn't Lu Sanyuan just start a rebellion? His troops are without a leader right now, so we can have them seek shelter under King Wu. That way, they will no longer have to act as rebels. Furthermore, King Wu will also have enough forces to keep his various rivals in check."

"Of course, you won't be doing this for nothing. You can put in your own trusted aides and control the troops that way. Once King Wu ascends to the throne, you can smoothly be granted the position of State Teacher. The Devil Sect will become a true Holy Sect. This is the ideal countless members of your sect pursue. With such a good opportunity in front of you, if the past sect masters' spirits were here, they would definitely support your choice."

Yun Jianyue had to admit this fellow did have some skills in stirring up sentiment. She said, "In the past, your method might not have been bad. And yet, right now, there are monsters invading from different worlds. All the various forces are currently joining hands to face this powerful enemy, and yet you and King Wu are doing these kinds of things in the background. Aren't you just putting the entire world in danger?"

"Who would have thought that the witch who killed people like a scythe through wheat would actually worry about the fate of mankind?" Yun Shou remarked with a look of surprise. "What you say does make sense, but even if the heavens collapse, there is a higher heaven. That is, let alone the fact that those foreign monsters still cannot invade this world." He paused for a moment and said with a smile, "Besides, it's actually thanks to those monsters causing trouble that the regent and main army's elites were transferred away. That was how King Wu was able to get such a great opportunity."

Yun Jianyue's demeanor immediately became extremely cold. Ah Zu was fighting against these monsters with his very life on the line, trying to save this world, and yet there were still so many ambitious bastards who only cared about their own personal benefits.

"Does the sect master carry misgivings toward the regent?" Yun Shou asked. "Forget about the fact that the two of you are friends, the incredible power the sect master showed a few days ago is something I still remember vividly. Your current cultivation isn't any weaker than the regent's, right?"

Yun Jianyue had a strange expression. She naturally knew that was when Zu An had impersonated her.

*Ah Zu really did give me a lot of face. If that stone cold woman heard about what happened, would she be scared to death by 'my' battle? From then on, she wouldn't even dare to raise her voice in front of me again.*

"Interesting," Yun Jianyue said as she deliberately put on an interested look. She wanted to get deeper into the other party's ranks to get more information. Then, she would be able to help Ah Zu at the most crucial moment. As for the two ladies in the capital, she didn't care who won or lost at all. However, she suddenly thought of something and added, "Even so, my disciple went missing recently, so I need to spend some time looking for her."

Yun Shou was stunned, asking, "The saintess is missing? Wasn't she still at the Lake of Hatred a few days ago? She actually contributed greatly in dealing with the aftermath."

"She and I had a fight," Yun Jianyue said ambiguously.

Yun Shou said with a sigh, "What can you do about young people; it's normal for them to have a bit of a temper. We will use our intelligence network to help you look for the saintess. We will swiftly contact the sect master as soon as we find something."

Yun Jianyue nodded in satisfaction, saying, "Then I'll be troubling you."

Yun Shou had an even bigger smile on his face as he replied, "The sect master's willingness to cooperate is our greatest honor."

...

Meanwhile, in Bluefield Country, Zu An reluctantly bid Tushan Yu goodbye. Unfortunately, the front lines' situation was urgent, or else he could have had some fun with this true fox spirit. After handing her instructions for dealing with the human side's reinforcements, though, he felt as if a huge weight had been lifted from his shoulders. He quickly rushed toward the sealed land again.

As he traveled further and further north, he could feel that the surrounding air was becoming colder and colder. If not for the ki protecting his body, his clothes would have already been covered in a layer of ice.

A few days later, he got close to the sealed land. There was endless snow wherever he looked, with thousands of miles of ice in any direction. In that instant, he thought that he had returned to the Great Snowy Mountain.

“What's going on?” Zu An muttered with a frown. Even though he had never come to the sealed land before, he had read up on information related to it. Even though the place was bitterly cold, it should have been a grassy plain with a bit of life. How had it become like this?

Along the way, he saw some fragmented homes that local hunters likely resided in. However, when he went in to look around, he didn't see a single person. Furthermore, several articles used for daily life were all still there. The chairs and tables were a bit messy, as if they had suddenly encountered danger and fled in alarm.

He looked up toward the distant horizon. There was a giant yellow-brown glow in that direction. A streak of light emerging from above reached straight into the heavens, while a streak below reached countless miles underground. It looked just like a giant eye towering over the world, as if the limit of the heavens itself had been ripped apart. The spatial rift he had previously seen in Violet Mountain couldn't compare to this one at all. He could feel a mysterious and terrifying pressure even from far away.

This was the sealed land that the Fiend races had guarded for over ten thousand years!

Zu An took a deep breath. Ever since he won against Zhao Han, he hadn't been able to help but become a bit overconfident. But now, it seemed that the universe was huge and full of extraordinary things. Before the might of the cosmos, just a trifling earth immortal wasn't much at all.

After being absent-minded for a while, he snapped out of his daze and collected his thoughts. He carefully examined the area in the distance. He could vaguely make out a city by the outskirts of the yellow-brown halo. That was the northernmost city of the Fiend races territory, Primeval Iron City. In the Fiend races' own words, it was a city built on the frozen fields, an impenetrable defense. It was mainly for defending against the sealed land, as well as for sheltering those who were in charge of logistics and quality of life.

Just then, Zu An vaguely sensed some auras of life there. He shot forth like lightning and quickly arrived in the skies over Primeval Iron City. Guards soon discovered him and shouted in alarm, and many crossbows and rune cannons were aimed at him.

A beautiful female voice suddenly called out, “All of you, halt. That is the regent!”

A young lady with an impressive bearing stopped the soldiers on the city gates. She was wearing a rainbow-colored dress that was especially alluring and dazzling in this world of ice. She had a light blue hair decoration in her hair that resembled a feather, adding a bit of youthful vigor to her mature appearance.

“We greet the regent!”

“We’re saved!”

...

The soldiers all bowed in respect. All of them couldn't help but cheer.

After all, in the past, Zu An had personally put the new emperor onto the throne. Legends surrounding him were still circulating through the army.

“Everyone, please rise!” Zu An said as he landed on the city walls. He raised his hand, and they all felt as if they were being supported by a pair of invisible hands. All of them were really moved.

“Princess, it has been a long time,” Zu An said, nodding toward Kong Nanwu off to the side.

Kong Nanwu bowed respectfully. She said with a smile, “Big brother Zu is still as suave as before.”

Before the two of them had time to chat, a brilliant rainbow aura flew over. When the one coming saw Zu An, they were first stunned, then roared with laughter, exclaiming, “I thought that the monsters were invading, but it was actually you!”

When he saw the handsome middle-aged man in front of him, Zu An couldn't help but say with a sigh, “The Wise King is still so elegant in style; it truly is enviable.” He was discovering that the fathers of these pretty women he encountered were all ridiculously handsome.

“I’m already old; how can I compare to you, someone in your prime?” Kong Qiaoming replied, now with an even bigger smile on his face.

*This kid really knows how to speak well; I love it!*

Meanwhile, another elder bowed to Zu An, saying, “I greet the regent.”



Zu An quickly supported him back up, replying, "Sir is too polite."

This person was Kong Qing, someone he had met before in Cloudcenter Commandery. Kong Qing had acted on his own initiative and showed him great sincerity in the Peacock race's place. Strictly speaking, Zu An still owed this man a favor.

Kong Qing felt warm inside. Now, their statuses were already completely different, and yet the other side still acted the same way. This was a rare sight.

The Peacock Wise King also nodded slightly, thinking that this youngster's temperament wasn't bad, and furthermore, he wasn't insufferably arrogant like others in the Fiend races.

*Hm, Wu'er normally has such high standards, but only when she talks about him is she full of endless praises. I heard Kong Qing mention that the two seemed to have already met each other on the human side. Wu'er even gave him that precious peacock feather... It seems I have to play matchmaker a bit between them.*

*Hmph, my daughter was previously the crown princess, the next generation Fiend Empress, and yet she ended up becoming a widow before she even had a proper marriage. He has to take responsibility!*

*The only thing is that he seems to have an ambiguous relationship with the Second Empress. But that's fine too; either way, there is no way the Second Empress can marry him properly. What's tricky is that the Qiao clan's daughter seems to have a marriage arrangement with him! This really is troublesome!*

Zu An gave the Peacock Wise King a strange look. Ever since they met each other, the latter had occasionally smiled and occasionally frowned while looking at him. Those expressions really were a bit strange.

He coughed and asked, "By the way, what is the situation with the sealed land right now? Didn't the Second Empress say that she was coming with the Golden Crow Guards? Why is she still not here even after all this time?"

Normally, with how small this city was, she would have already come out once she received news of his arrival, right?

When she heard the urgency in his tone, Kong Nanwu had an ambiguous smile. There were rumors that he had something going on with the Second Empress, but back then, she had just thought of it as slander spoken by the defeated. Now, it seemed that could really be the case.

The Peacock Wise King's expression became serious. He took Zu An to a quieter place atop the city walls before saying, "The Second Empress entered the sealed land!"

"What?!" Zu An exclaimed, feeling really shocked this time.

Kong Nanwu explained, "When the king court suddenly received news that something happened in the sealed land, many people suspected that there could have been a problem with the Second Prince. That was why the Second Empress personally gathered the elites of the different races to investigate what was going on here.

"According to our previous investigations, though, the Second Prince didn't betray us. Rather, the crack in the sealed land grew larger and larger, and the monsters that crossed over increased in number. The Second Prince knew that if this continued, that would only exhaust the Fiend races until there wasn't even a single drop of blood left. Those monsters' reproduction abilities really are shocking, and we simply can't win a war of attrition. As such, he took his army into the sealed land to repair the ancient seal."

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Chapter 2030: Guaranteed Death

Zu An was stunned, expressing his confusion and shock. When had someone as ambitious as the Second Prince ever reached such enlightenment?

The Peacock Wise King said with a bitter smile, "At first, our reaction was the same as yours, but later, our investigations showed that this was indeed the case. Ever since the Second Prince launched a suicidal attack and rushed into the sealed land, practically no monsters came back out. That clearly meant the Second Prince's proactive assault was effective." He sighed and added, "The Second Prince was wrong in the past, but he is still a good man with a strong will. He has earned the admiration of the rest of us."

Zu An was a bit confused, wondering, "Can humans enter the sealed land too?" He had thought that the monsters were sealed inside, and that it wasn't suitable for human life. Now, it seemed highly likely that that wasn't the case.

"The sealed land is actually very spacious. At first, the sealed land wasn't that large. This is the result of thousands of years of gradual expansion," the Peacock Wise King explained.

Kong Nanwu looked at the terrifying crack in the horizon, and couldn't help but shiver.

The Peacock Wise King continued, "Many places inside are actually strongholds and arrangements left behind by ancient seniors. But after tens of thousands of years of fighting, we could no longer hold onto those places and were forced back bit by bit. Eventually, we withdrew to this Primeval Iron City." He paused for a bit, then said with a complicated expression, "And inside the sealed land, there are actually many places similar to Primeval Iron City."

Zu An's expression turned a bit strange. He was able to picture the vast sea of blood and flames that had filled the area from just hearing those few sentences. He sorted out his thoughts and asked gravely, "Then why did the Second Empress enter?"

The Peacock Wise King replied, "When we came here and heard about the Second Prince and his soldiers' brave actions, people got worked up and demanded that we assist the Second Prince. We couldn't let a heroic figure like the Second Prince vainly sacrifice himself."

"Even though the Second Empress is a woman and shares a grudge with the Second Prince, she abandoned her former hatred and suggested leading her troops in to offer assistance. The Golden Crow Guards were full of fighting spirit too," Kong Nanwu said, her voice full of admiration. It was clear that, as she was a woman as well, the Second Empress gave her a lot of inspiration.

Zu An was someone who had experienced all kinds of disasters and grave situations, so the way he looked at things was now completely different. Soon after, he deduced the Second Empress' attitude at the time. She definitely didn't want to save the Second Prince, but the Second Prince's willingness to die for the cause was too inspiring. If she tried to stop them from entering, her prestige could have taken an unrecoverable hit. After all, the Fiend races and the human empire were different. The king court didn't have as much control over the various races, which were all extremely independent. The new Fiend

Emperor was still young, and he and the Second Empress were a child and his mother without a man to protect them, so it would be easy for them to be overthrown.

Of course, the Second Empress wouldn't randomly agree to command troops to save the Second Prince. If she really did save the Second Prince, his prestige would skyrocket. Furthermore, after going to hell and back together, the elite Golden Crow Guards and the troops of the different races could become more partial to the Second Prince. Everything would really be too late then. That was why she had taken the initiative to head inside to save them, which would immediately eliminate those threats.

Whether she saved the Second Prince or not, she had already created a heroic, fearless, and selfless image for herself. Everyone in the Fiend races would admire and worship her. No matter how outstanding the Second Prince was, he could only serve as a subject under her. There were no issues with her actions, because her choice was indeed extremely dangerous.

When Zu An thought of that, he couldn't help but become a bit worried. He asked, "Then did those people follow the Second Prince into the sealed land?"

"Her highness took the Golden Crow race's experts and the king court's elite Golden Crow Guards," the Peacock Wise King replied. "Apart from that, the Little Golden Peng King took the Tiger and Lion race's most powerful individuals with them. They are all among the Fiend races' most outstanding warriors." Seemingly aware that Zu An's relationship with Yu Yanluo was special, he added, "Right, the Medusa Queen also led the Snake race's experts and is following at the Second Empress' side."

*This kid really is unfaithful... but among the Fiend races, this isn't a flaw, and is instead an extraordinary merit.*

*Which fiend king doesn't have a group of wives? Only the strongest individual can have more mates and thus more descendants, leading to a more prosperous tribe.*

When he thought of those things, he became more and more satisfied with Zu An.

Upon hearing that Yu Yanluo had also followed them into the sealed land, Zu An became even more worried. He asked, "What about the other main forces, such as the Demon race, the Scorpion King, and the Flying Leopard King's

armies?" The Great Elf King staying behind with the young Fiend Emperor to oversee the king court was something he knew about, but he hadn't heard anything about the other critical factions.

"Princess Suolun arrived with some of her subordinates. According to what she said, the Demon race's Yun, Suolun, Rong, and Wu clans' reinforcements will arrive soon," Kong Nanwu said, although she frowned slightly and added, "But until now, we still haven't seen a single soldier from those clans."

Zu An was stunned. Could it be that the Demon race didn't wish to participate in this situation at all, and Princess Suolun was being treated as a scapegoat? Or had something happened among the Demon race?

Kong Nanwu then said, "The Scorpion King and the Flying Leopard King should have arrived as well, but we haven't seen any trace of them yet either."

Zu An coldly wondered, "Are they trying to hold onto their forces and disobey central orders?"

The Peacock Wise King became quiet. It now seemed that such a thing was indeed a possibility. Whether it was humans or fiends, they had never been completely united. Every faction had their own goals and interests. It was really difficult to get them all to work together for one common purpose.

Zu An suddenly thought of something and quickly said, "Wise King, the humans' reinforcements will soon arrive in the north. Send some people to coordinate and receive them, to prevent anything bad from happening."

The Scorpion King and the Flying Leopard King had always fought against the humans, so their territory was close to the place where the humans' reinforcements were coming from. It was one thing if they didn't help out, but if they decided to fight the human army, that was definitely not something Tushan Yu could stop on her own.

The Peacock Wise King clearly sensed the danger and quickly ordered, "Kong Qing, go on the trip yourself. At the same time, take my personal token to ask for the Elf King's help." He had to stand guard here to receive the Second Empress and couldn't leave. Meanwhile, Kong Qing was his right-hand man and was the most suitable for taking care of such a thing.

"Understood!" Kong Qing replied, knowing that this was an important matter. He cupped his hands and quickly left.

Zu An looked at the rift in the distant sky and said, "I'm going on a trip to the sealed land to see if I can find out any information regarding the Second Empress' group."

"You absolutely cannot!" Kong Nanwu quickly warned him, "We already sent several groups of people in, but not a single one of them returned. The best strategy is to stay here in preparation until the other reinforcements arrive, and then we can discuss what to do together!"

Zu An shook his head and said, "We can't be certain when those reinforcements will even arrive. I can't wait that long, and the people inside definitely can't either. You remain here to receive them, while I'll go first to take a look."

When she saw that he had already made his decision, Kong Nanwu quickly said, "Then I'll go with you."

"You're just causing trouble!" The Peacock Wise King immediately panicked. "Your cultivation will do nothing but slow down the regent. Just stay here obediently! Primeval Iron City is where you can display your abilities more easily." Even though he did have thoughts of playing matchmaker between the two, the sealed land was too dangerous. Not a single one of those experts had come back out after entering, so how could he have his daughter take the risk?

Zu An smiled and said to Kong Nanwu, "What the Wise King says is indeed the case. It's more suitable for the princess to remain here and plan for our strategy ahead. We don't know what it's like inside, so it will be a bit more convenient for me to go in alone."

Kong Nanwu couldn't continue to insist when both of them were speaking like this. She could only say sadly, "You have to be careful!"

Zu An nodded. Then, he asked the Peacock Wise King about any intelligence related to the sealed land. After all, at the moment, he knew practically nothing.

The Peacock Wise King said with a serious tone, "The sealed land is surrounded by extremely terrifying chaotic spatial streams that can crush any beings that enter and leave. Not even the late Fiend Emperor was able to enter by relying on his own flesh. But whenever the sun and moon exchange places in the evening, the spatial flow becomes weaker. At that time, you can

then enter safely by borrowing the power of formations. For the past few thousand years, whenever morning and evening, sun and moon have intertwined, the area around the sealed land has overflowed with blood. The monsters inside also use that time to leave, so all those stationed here have always been tasked with driving those monsters back.” As he spoke, he took out a jade tile engraved with a complicated rune formation, adding, “If you take this, then to a certain degree, you can avoid the chaotic spatial streams’ corrosion.”

After standing guard here for over ten thousand years, the Fiend races had already researched a lot of knowledge related to the sealed land. This jade tile was none other than one of their developments.

Zu An took the jade tile from him. On its surface was the rune formation used to traverse that chaotic space. Even with his current knowledge in runes, he actually couldn't immediately see through the secrets it contained. He had to admit that in the past, the Fiend races really had produced talented people.

Then, the Peacock Wise King shared some more intelligence related to the sealed land, but it was mostly related to the outer areas. The Fiend races didn't know much about the deeper areas.

“Thank you, Wise King,” Zu An said, bidding them goodbye and quickly flying toward the sealed land. It just happened to be the time when the sun and moon exchanged places, so he could enter immediately.

He soon arrived in front of the giant crack. Even with Zu An's powerful cultivation, he was still briefly absentminded. It seemed that the fear of big things really was something innate.... The spatial rift really was just way too huge. Forget about him, before this spatial rift, even a great serpent would be nothing more than an ant.

As he sensed the energy of destruction and death coming from inside, Zu An felt goosebumps. He thought of something and took out an Eight Trigrams Plate to carry out a divination. This was one of the Baopu Sutra's seven domains of cultivation! Not even he had much confidence in the sealed land, so he decided to use the divination skill to scout out the situation first.

Soon after, the surface of the plate began to shake and spin. Then, finally, sparkling celestial diagrams appeared on its surface. A star in the northeastern direction was the most dazzling, flickering continuously.



Zu An's expression immediately changed greatly when he saw that, because it was the most dangerous Life Extinction Star! When that sign appeared, it signified death nine out of ten times.

Then, the celestial diagram grew dim, with black fog covering everything. The stars became dark red, as if they had become bloody skulls.

Zu An was speechless. This was a sign that meant death ten out of ten times.

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## **Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2031: Asking for Help**

### Chapter 2031: Asking for Help

Zu An's entire body grew numb. He rarely used these kinds of divination techniques, but now that he finally had, this was the result he got: The never-before-seen guaranteed death.

He remained silent for a long time. In the end, he laughed and put the divination plate away. The Second Empress was inside, and so was Yu Yanluo. Even they weren't scared, so how could he cower and hide outside? Besides, which one of his battles over the years hadn't been on the brink of death? He was already used to all kinds of dangers.

As for the divination's results, if it really was that accurate, no one would have to work hard anymore. With his current cultivation realm, he could vaguely sense that fate was arranged by those up above, but it still depended on one's own efforts. When the two were combined, that would ultimately form the trajectory of one's fate.

He didn't know that as he had that thought, the divination plate he put away into his Brilliant Glass Bead underwent a new change. The murky darkness became a bit fainter, and a trace of white light appeared in its depths. The bloody skulls also gradually scattered, a sign of extreme sorrow turning to joy.

Zu An took out a formation wheel, and his hands quickly moved across its surface. Soon after, streaks of clear light scattered all throughout. Even though he decided to take the risk and enter, he wasn't going to go in fully



blindly. Instead, he set up all kinds of defensive formations in preparation just in case.

When he entered the giant halo of light, even Zu An with his cultivation became a bit absent-minded. It was as if time and space inside were displaced. The light within was distorted, and his five senses grew strange. The higher one's cultivation was, the clearer that unnatural feeling of distortion became.

As the space sensed that a living being had entered, winds swept wildly through it. This wasn't a normal wind; it exuded a terrifying aura that could be felt even from far away, as if it could instantly shave off all of one's flesh, then grind one's bones to dust.

A piece of jade in Zu An's possession began to shine. It was the jade tile the Peacock Wise King had given him, something used precisely to deal with the chaotic spatial streams. Sure enough, as if sensing the jade tile in his possession, the chaotic streams parted to either side.

Just like that, time passed. Zu An felt weightless, and he felt as if the world was spinning around him. Before he knew it, he landed once again on hard ground. The next thing he saw wasn't the distorted light, however. He stabilized his body and looked around him, stunned.

At first, he had thought that the sealed land would be a place full of blood and flames, of ruined structures and many corpses, but there wasn't the slightest bit of carnage. Instead, it was a vast expanse of white. There was ice, snow, and cold winds stretching as far as the eye could see. He couldn't see any trace of life, not even a single plant. Snow stretched endlessly into the distance. Even with Zu An's current cultivation, he could feel the chill in his bones. It was easy to imagine just how low the temperature of the place was.

Clear light suddenly began to flicker around him. Zu An was startled, because it was the reaction of a formation that defended against poisonous miasma. Even though he was immune to poison, there was no need for him to test for poison himself; as such, he had prepared a formation ahead of time. It now seemed that the surrounding air carried a degree of toxicity. Even though it wasn't the kind that would kill someone immediately, as time went on, it would start to corrode one's limbs and bones.

When he recalled that it had already been quite some time since the Second Empress and the others went in, Zu An became more and more worried.

Those with lower ranks of cultivation could very well have already been afflicted by the poison and lost most of their fighting strength.

Suddenly, a formation surged with yellow light, then shattered into specks of starlight, making Zu An tremble. That defensive formation wasn't particularly strong, but it had a special use, which was that it could detect the approach of any tangible creature. He had set up many evil-warding formations, as well; if any incorporeal spirits approached, he would also be alerted.

With his current cultivation, he didn't need strong defenses. After all, no matter how strong a formation was, it wouldn't be stronger than his own body. Even so, now that he was in a place he had never been to before that was full of dangers, coupled with the terrifying results of his earlier divination, he had no choice but to exercise absolute vigilance. As such, these alert formations were perfect for him. That way, he wouldn't be ambushed by an unknown being and be done in without knowing what happened at all.

Zu An looked all around, but was a bit puzzled, because he clearly didn't sense any enemies approaching. Why had the formations alerted him? He set up several formations, and then those formations were shattered one after another. Some unknown being was clearly attacking them.

Suddenly, he sneered and exclaimed, "I found you!" He reached out his hand and pressed down. The ground immediately split open, and a terrifying suction force dragged a figure out. Zu An was stunned, because the thing in his grip was actually a snowman. It was exactly like the snowmen people made in his previous world. Its chubby body had no neck, and its arms and legs were all really short.

When it was caught, a malicious expression appeared on the snowman's face. It brandished its claws and fangs at Zu An. However, Zu An sneered. With a squeeze of his hand, the snowman exploded, turning into endless wind and snow.

No wonder he hadn't been able to sense its presence; the sensation of its body and the surrounding snow were exactly the same. This world lacked everything but snow, after all. Furthermore, it had been hidden underground, so of course he couldn't see it.

The surrounding snowy land gradually broke apart. One after another, snowmen crawled out and screamed viciously, yet made no noise.

However, with a wave of Zu An's hand, an invisible streak of sword energy engulfed the surroundings. Soon after, the snowmen were all crushed to pieces. He was about to leave when he suddenly sensed something. He looked at the ground where the snowmen had been. There, the crushed snow rejoined at a visible rate. Soon after, the snowmen once again stood up and rushed at Zu An again.

Zu An was stunned. He quickly defeated the snowmen, but they immediately gathered and regenerated once more. He was speechless. The snowmen weren't that strong, but what was tricky was that they had undying bodies. Regardless of how many times he defeated them, they always regenerated quickly. After all, the world around him was an endless expanse of ice and snow. If this continued, it would be hard to say if he could hold on longer.

"Elemental creatures, huh..." Zu An muttered; he gave up on physical attacks and used the White Lotus Flame.

A giant lotus flower blossomed amid the snow, and countless flames poured out. The snowmen were all melted and couldn't regenerate any more. All that remained in their place was an enormous crater where the ice and snow had melted, revealing the dirt buried deep down. The terrifying temperature of the White Lotus Flame even created some flowing lava on the surface of the dirt.

Zu An's eyes suddenly narrowed. He flew to the center of the magma and fished out a corpse... No, half a corpse. The body had already been chewed up by the snowmen, its internal organs emptied out. Only the head was still in good shape.

Zu An's expression darkened, because he recognized this person. He was one of the guards at Princess Suolun's side. Even though he didn't remember the guard's name, Zu An had seen him several times at the princess' side, and knew that he was one of Princess Suolun's most trusted guards. If even he had ended up in such a state, that meant everything likely boded ill for Princess Suolun. He searched around, but only found one corpse. He wondered if it was really just the one, or if the others had already been completely devoured by those snowmen.

Zu An reached out his hand, and a command token appeared in it. He saw that it was Princess Suolun's emblem, likely her personal waist token. It seemed she had likely sent this guard back to ask for reinforcements, but he died when he was only a step away from the exit.

“Rest in peace. If I end up meeting Suolun Shi, I'll help her,” he said. With a casual wave of his hand, flames burned the corpse away to prevent it from being defiled by the monsters further.

He looked around him and saw that everything was the same no matter where he looked. In here, direction already became completely meaningless. Since the Second Empress had come in with many people, he had wanted to see if there were any traces. Unfortunately, the wind and snow here were too strong. Even if there were any traces, they would already have completely disappeared. It was a pity that Honglei wasn't here, or else her glowing red yellow talisman would be perfect for searching for people.

After thinking about it, he took out the divination plate again. But after using it, he saw that the kan position indicated 'water', while the gen position indicated 'mountain', meaning that the mountains were high and waters deep. The path ahead would be full of difficulties. Still, the divination did provide a result, which was to head southwest.

“Since I don't have any other clues, I might as well go southwest first,” Zu An muttered to himself, then instantly disappeared into the distance.

After traveling for several hundred miles, he suddenly picked up weak shouts of fighting within the wind and snow.

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#### Chapter 2032: Total Defeat

Zu An was startled. Any fighting here could signify his compatriots from the Fiend races. He darted forth and quickly rushed to the scene of battle.

There, several men and one woman were surrounded by a group of monsters. The men were surrounding the woman at the center, clearly protecting her. However, the woman wasn't just idling there either. Instead, she quickly used all kinds of skills to attack the monsters around her.

But no matter how hard they tried, people on their side fell. At almost the same instant, the fallen were dragged away by the surrounding monsters before being devoured in the blink of an eye. The others tried to save them,

but as soon as one left the ranks, they were swallowed up by the pouncing monsters. With a bitter scream, they quickly turned into torn flesh.

When they saw that, the remaining comrades' eyes turned red. Unfortunately, there was nothing they could do. They could only watch as their ring of defense grew smaller and smaller. It was clear that their group was going to be swallowed up by the sea of monsters at any moment. They would then follow in the footsteps of their dead companions.

However, just when they were about to be overwhelmed with despair, a streak of sword brilliance cut through the air. Immediately after, the monsters screamed bitterly and collapsed.

When they turned around, they saw that Zu An was flying in their direction. They all couldn't help but cheer, "It's the regent!"

"Princess, we're saved!"

This group was none other than the Demon race's Princess Suolun and her personal guards.

Just then, however, a seriously injured young guard saw that it would still be some time before Zu An would arrive. A calm smile appeared on his face, and he formed some complicated seals and mumbled a series of profound words.

Princess Suolun finally noticed what he was doing. She quickly shouted, "Ah Kuan, don't!"

However, the guard had already finished his incantation. His surroundings surged with purple light. Streak after streak of light fired out, blasting the approaching monsters full of holes. Then, he himself collapsed to the ground.

Just then, Zu An arrived and forced back the remaining monsters. The survivors sat down in ruin, unable to muster even a bit more strength.

Princess Suolun ran over to the young guard's side, crying, "Ah Kuan, why are you so foolish?"

The young guard chuckled, his face pale as he said, "Princess, my injuries are too serious and I can't live anymore. I'd rather ignite my last bit of life to protect you for a little longer."

Princess Suolun sobbed, asking, “Ah Kuan, do you still have any unfulfilled wishes? I will definitely help you make them happen.”

The entire time they had been in danger, Ah Kuan was always the one who had fought with the most boldness. His injuries had all been sustained from protecting her.

The young guard shook his head slightly and said, “I’m an orphan, and since I’m all alone in this world, there’s not much to worry about. If you’re really asking me if I have any unfulfilled desires...” He paused for a bit. He looked at Princess Suolun’s beautiful face. Even while incredibly weak, the others could still sense his awkwardness as he asked, “Can I hug... the princess?”

Before he even finished his sentence, Princess Suolun took him into her arms. She continued to sob.

When they saw that, the surrounding guards didn’t feel any jealousy. Instead, there was only sorrow in their eyes. Ah Kuan was someone who had grown up with the princess. To a certain extent, they were childhood sweethearts. Even though he had done his best to hide it, how could the rest of them not recognize his admiration toward Princess Suolun? After all, who wouldn’t like the beautiful and noble princess?

Unfortunately, there was a difference in status between them. A guard like Ah Kuan understood his responsibility and fate, so he could only bury the love deep at the bottom of his heart. Only at the final moment of his life did he finally abandon his misgivings and open up his heart.

When he sensed the lovely princess hug him and even cry for him, a smile finally appeared on the face of the young man named Ah Kuan. He raised his hand to wipe at the tears on the princess’ face, but halfway through, he had already used up all of his energy. Then, it fell limply to the ground, and he breathed his last.

“Ah Kuan!”

The survivors couldn’t help but wipe at their tears.

Zu An sighed when he saw this scene. Who knew how many similar situations would appear in the battle against the foreign monsters?

The monsters that had kept their distance, wary of Zu An's sword ki, now became a bit restless. Their instinctive hunger made them approach again.

When Zu An looked at the monsters' jaws dripping with saliva and exuding a foul stench, he sighed inwardly. This world had the Fiend races and Demon race, but they were still humanoid in appearance. If they hid some of their unique traits, they would have no trouble at all blending into human society. Meanwhile, These foreign monsters looked completely different. They came in all sorts of different, strange shapes and sizes, and even the vicious beasts of this world looked charming compared to them.

Of course, these monsters were no doubt only at the lowest level. The Demonic Motherbug and War Priest Zu An had encountered before all had higher intelligence, while these were more like monsters that moved based on their own instincts. For example, they had been frightened by Zu An's sword ki, but a while later, they couldn't resist their hunger and approached again.

Everyone present could not only see the monsters' terrifying teeth clearly; they could even smell the foul stench coming from the creatures' mouths. The Demon race guards were all alarmed. They had witnessed the monsters' power themselves. The creatures weren't that strong individually, but there were just too many of them. If they killed one, ten more would immediately appear. There was no end to the onslaught; there was no way the guards could ever kill them all! Instead, they had been picked off one by one. After watching that happen again and again, the shock they felt was already overwhelming.

"Big brother Zu, hurry and break out! Otherwise, you'll never be able to get away if these monsters surround you," Princess Suolun said while trying hard to suppress her grief. She couldn't let these guards of hers die for nothing.

"Break out?" Zu An repeated, shaking his head. "There's no need." After all, he had come to save them and not to run away.

Zu An stood at the center of the battlefield with his hands behind him. Suddenly, rings of golden ripples appeared in the air, and golden weapons slowly manifested within them. What followed was a golden shower that instantly nailed countless monsters to death. Endless golden sword ki rushed out in all directions at speeds surpassing what the eye could clearly see, only leaving behind faint golden afterimages.

The survivors watched silently with dumbstruck expressions. Suolun Shi's small mouth opened slightly, and her expression was a bit absentminded as she murmured, "How beautiful..."

In just a few moments, the surrounding vicious monsters were completely slaughtered. Only a few that were furthest out survived; even they finally saw that the situation wasn't good and ran for their lives.

Suolun Shi and her subordinates' mouths were agape. They all looked at Zu An with worshipful expressions, exclaiming, "The regent is truly like a divine being!"

Zu An saw that many of them had injuries that reached their very bones. He took out some medicine and gave it to them, asking, "Why are you all here? Where is the Second Empress' group?"

The survivors expressed their gratitude while Suolun Shi replied, "We previously entered the sealed land together with the Second Empress, but because this place was just too big and everything was a white expanse, in order to find the Second Prince and his troops, we took our people and split up to search in different directions. Then, when we passed through a snowy valley, we suffered an ambush and were completely wiped out. It's all my fault..."

She sobbed in grief as she spoke. The guards around her all spoke up to console her, saying that it wasn't the princess' fault and that she couldn't have expected to run into the monsters' main force.

"Main force?" Zu An repeated, shaking his head. "I fear that this isn't the monsters' main force."

"There are so many formidable monsters, and yet they're still not the main force?" the guards exclaimed in shock.

Zu An said gravely, "The monsters have terrifying reproductive abilities. This amount is nothing but a drop in the ocean. There's no way it could be their main force." He had already faced the monsters many times and knew about their abilities. Even though there were a lot of them, they didn't give him much pressure. This was definitely not the main force.

When they heard that, all of the Demon race's group felt despair. They had felt as if they'd encountered the main force, so a total defeat in that situation



would be understandable. However, they had never expected to have only encountered some stray forces. That meant everything probably boded ill for any others in the sealed land.

“Who suggested that all of you split up?” Zu An asked seriously. Splitting up forces in an unknown land wasn’t a wise decision at all.

“It was that Little Golden Peng King,” replied Suolun Shi. “He felt that this place was too large and that it would be faster if we searched in different directions. Furthermore, the army that entered was from many different factions, so there was more or less some conflict between us. Thus, if we insisted on moving together, it could have created issues. The Second Empress and the rest of us felt that his proposal was reasonable.”

Zu An said with a snort, “If you wanted to speed up your search, it would be enough to send more scouts; I’ve never heard of dividing the troops. There’s no way he, as one of the four great generals, wouldn’t understand that.”

Suolun Shi asked with a trembling voice, “Are you saying there is something wrong with the Little Golden Peng King? But why would he do that?”

Zu An shook his head and said, “We don’t have enough information, so it’s hard for me to say either. I hope I’m just overthinking things.” He pointed behind him and said, “Head this way for another several hundred meters and you’ll be at the entrance of the sealed land. Once the sun and moon switch places, you can leave safely. I still need to continue looking for other people.”

Suolun Shi had a resolute expression as she said, “I will go with you.”

The rest of the Demon race guards all got up.

“I am willing to follow!”

“The Demon race has no deserters!”

“For the glory of the Suolun clan!”

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## Chapter 2033: City of the Dead

Zu An frowned, saying, "All of you are seriously injured right now, and need to return and recover as quickly as possible. You can leave the rest to me."

Suolun Shi shook her head slightly and said, "I only have some superficial wounds. After using your medicine, I've already pretty much recovered. So many of our Demon race's brave warriors have perished here, and I cannot let them die such obscure deaths; I must find out what is going on here. This is my responsibility as a member of the Suolun clan."

Just then, the guards next to her also spoke up in agreement. After seeing their former comrades die miserably in battle, they were all full of anger and a desire for vengeance. After picking up that there could be a conspiracy involved here from Zu An's words, that feeling grew even stronger.

Just then, Suolun Shi told them, "All of you, go back first. Your injuries are too severe."

When they heard her say that, the guards all panicked. They were about to say something when they heard the princess continue, "Furthermore, you all still bear an important mission, which is to bring the information from inside here back to the outside. Also, you all need to coordinate with the Yun, Rong, Wu, and our own Suolun clan's reinforcements, or else they'll repeat the same disaster we went through."

When they heard that, the guards all understood the importance of their mission and didn't insist on staying anymore.

Zu An also said, "Princess, you should go back as well. So many people gave up their lives to protect you, so how can you continue to risk your life?"

Suolun Shi replied seriously, "Whether they are men or women, the people of our Suolun clan are all brave warriors, so how can we be scared of death? If the deceased were watching over me right now and knew that they were protecting a coward, perhaps they would be unable to pass on in peace."

The other guards also bowed and said, "We ask the regent to take the princess with you."

Zu An was a bit troubled. To be honest, he really didn't want to take the extra baggage that was Suolun Shi with him.

Suolun Shi seemed to have guessed his thoughts and quickly added, "The regent has just arrived and doesn't know much about the sealed land. As such, I can be your guide."

Zu An nodded inwardly. She was a smart woman after all. With how things were, he couldn't continue to refuse her and said, "Then I'll be troubling you."

Suolun Shi finally sighed in relief. Then, she bade her subordinates, as well as Ah Kuan's remains, goodbye. She tasked her subordinates with bringing him back to the Suolun clan and burying him in the clan burial grounds. After watching her subordinates disappear into the wind and snow, she wiped away her tears and said apologetically, "Sorry, I made big brother Zu wait for a long time."

"The princess' sincerity is truly admirable," Zu An said with a sigh.

Suolun Shi had a distressed smile as she remarked, "Compared to what they've done for me, what I have done is really little."

Zu An became quiet. She had just watched so many of her people die, so no form of consolation would do much right now.

Suolun Shi sorted out her thoughts and said, "Big brother Zu, before the armies split up, the Second Empress' main army went directly north."

Zu An nodded and headed north. Suolun Shi quickly followed along. She was the Demon race's princess, so she naturally had many magic weapons that assisted in flight. Of course, she was still much slower than Zu An.

A while later, Zu An frowned and flew back, suggesting, "How about I take you with me?"

Suolun Shi knew that she was too slow and couldn't help but become embarrassed. She replied, "I'll be troubling you."

Zu An didn't say too much either. He picked her up and flew into the air.

Suolun Shi hadn't expected him to be so direct. She lost her sense of balance and instinctively grabbed onto his arm. Eventually, however, she got used to the speed of this kind of flight. When she saw how quickly the world beneath was changing, she was filled with admiration.

*Big brother Zu's cultivation really is unfathomable; no wonder he was able to convince the various forces of the king court.*

The frigid winds gave her slight goosebumps. As a result, the warmth coming from the arm around her waist was especially striking.

She had been pretty ever since she was little, and she also had a distinguished status, so she never lacked pursuers; as such, she had always paid special attention to these things. She had never let any man have any physical contact with her. And yet, for some reason, in front of Zu An, she didn't feel on guard at all. He carried her rather casually, and she didn't resist it at all, as if all this was just that natural.

Still, the heat around her waist did have a numbing sensation. She couldn't help but sneak a look at the man beside her. When she saw his handsome features that seemed to be sculpted out of marble, she couldn't help but blush a bit.

Suolun Shi's ladylike movements didn't escape Zu An's notice. He had to admit that the princess was beautiful. Even though she had been fighting all this time and was a bit haggard, it still didn't cover up her beauty. The bit of redness on her face made her look even more charming.

Even so, Zu An was already completely different from before. He was more worried about the Second Empress and Yu Yanluo, and about the safety of the Fiend races' main force. He was worried about whether the monsters from different worlds were going to launch a full force invasion, and if this world would meet its end... Compared to those things, lust didn't cause the slightest ripple in his mind.

However, in order to help ease her awkwardness, he asked, "Princess, can you please tell me what happened over the past few days in detail? Also, what exactly are you looking for?"

Suolun Shi's expression became serious. As the Demon race's distinguished daughter, she had received a meticulous upbringing ever since she was young. She naturally wouldn't be the type to lose her head over her emotions. She answered, "After we split up, apart from looking for the Second Prince and his troops, we were also looking for the real sealed land."

"The real sealed land?" Zu An repeated, stunned. This was the first time he had heard of such a thing.

"This was something I only heard about after entering as well," Suolun Shi replied. "This is a secret that only the successive generations of Fiend Emperors knew about. The Second Empress needed to assist the Fiend Emperor, so she had the right to learn about it. Since the situation was dire, she decided not to keep restricting the information. She summoned the various leaders to discuss this confidential matter.

"There is a true sealed land inside this place. That is the place where the ancient powerful beings sealed the other worlds' monsters, which they referred to as the ghost race at the time. But as time went on, the seal loosened a bit. Many monsters snuck out from within, and they slowly encroached on the surrounding territory. By the time the Fiend races noticed, it was already too late.

"After thousands of years, one after another, the Fiend races lost their outposts on the front line. The monsters' range of influence spread continuously. Fortunately, the situation was still manageable, but that conflict formed what those of the present world now know as the sealed land."

Zu An now understood. He said, "So, that means there's a true seal in the depths of this world. As long as we can repair that seal, we can completely avert the sealed land crisis, no?"

Suolun Shi answered with a bitter smile, "How could it be that easy? That is most likely what the Second Prince thought back then, so he took the risk of barging in. Now, everyone has sacrificed so much because of him. What we should focus on now is to try to control the sealed land's outer region, preventing the monsters inside from spilling out; that should already be enough."

Zu An was actually starting to admire the Second Prince a bit.

*That guy has quite the sharp strategic insight, but he overestimated his abilities a bit. This is a problem that the past Fiend Emperors haven't been able to solve for thousands of years, and yet he thought he alone could fix it all?*

*He was probably driven mad from despair, right? He knew he had already been practically abandoned and could only exhaust his troops here. In order to strive for that sliver of a chance at life, he could only take the risk.*

It was still both Zu An and the Second Empress who had been too careless. They had never expected him to actually make such a choice.

Then, Suolun Shi and Zu An talked about what had happened during the intervening days. After Zu An listened to it all, he just felt that something wasn't quite right, yet he couldn't really place his finger on it either.

Suddenly, a trace of red fluttered in front of them. Even Suolun Shi's attention was drawn in that direction. After all, the world around them had contained nothing but an expanse of pure white, and yet now, an entire area was red. How could it not be surprising?

"Could this be the true sealed land?" Suolun Shi murmured, her voice trembling.

Zu An shook his head slightly and said, "That's not too likely. If it had been that close, at least one Fiend Emperor could have reached this place over several thousands of years..."

His eyes suddenly narrowed, because he already knew what that trace of red was. It was a city - a city of the dead that was dyed entirely red from blood!

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Chapter 2034: Problem

"I... think I smell blood," Suolun Shi said, her face turning a bit pale. Even though she still couldn't see the city of death clearly yet, as a member of the Demon race, her sense of smell was especially sensitive.

"There is a city of death up ahead, and from the looks of it, a bitter battle has been fought there. The blood still hasn't dried yet," Zu An explained gravely.

Suolun Shi's voice was shaking as she said, "Could it be the Second Empress' army..."

Zu An didn't reply. Instead, he flew even faster.

Soon after, they arrived outside the city. Most of it was already buried under snow, with only some broken walls remaining exposed. It seemed to be a city

the Fiend races had abandoned a long time ago during the ancient wars. Even so, a great battle had clearly taken place here not too long ago, because there were bloodstains everywhere. Even much of the snow was dyed dark red. There was a strange stench, as well as the fishy smell of blood mixed into the air. Even Suolun Shi, who was used to all kinds of terrifying things, couldn't help but retch when she saw the scene.

Zu An continued forward, and Suolun Shi quickly followed behind him. The two looked around. They saw that apart from the bloodstains, there were also some scattered weapons and shields. However, there wasn't a single person in sight.

"Why don't we see even a single corpse?" Suolun Shi wondered, her voice trembling a bit. Everything here was just way too strange. Not only were there no corpses from the Fiend races' army, there were no monster corpses either. Forget about that, there weren't even any severed limbs or other remains.

Zu An said seriously, "Those monsters eat the corpses. Even the corpses of their comrades are no exception."

Suolun Shi thought back to how her companions had also been devoured by the monsters. She turned to the corner of a wall and vomited again.

Zu An's mood was also really grave. If there weren't any remains, that meant the monsters had won this battle. Otherwise, this definitely wouldn't have happened. As he stared at the blood-red stains everywhere, he could imagine just how cruel the attack had been. The hellish surroundings made him feel an indescribable rage.

Heavy breathing and footsteps started to fill the air around them. Roughly a dozen monsters that resembled komodo dragons moved in their direction, as if Suolun Shi's vomit had drawn their attention. The monsters' skin was full of cracks, and it seemed like the flesh underneath was rotten too, with disgusting mucus dripping out all over the place.

"Crawlers!" Suolun Shi exclaimed, her expression changing.

She had witnessed the power of these things. Even though they were all ugly on the outside, they were incredibly fast and strong, able to easily tear through a soldier's armor. More importantly, there was poison in the mucus covering their bodies. If one were to come into contact with it, one's entire body would

quickly be corroded into a pile of rotten flesh. Many soldiers from the Demon race had lost their lives to these creatures.

The crawlers seemed to have sensed her as well, and looked as if they had just seen the most delicious food. All of them started to become excited. As they dashed at Suolun Shi, their clumsy crawling turned into sprinting; they moved with extreme speed.

Suolun Shi was about to counterattack when a streak of sword ki came from off to the side. In the time it took for sparks to fly off a flint, sword shadows filled the whole area. A moment later, a dozen crawlers' heads separated from their bodies, and they were killed without even knowing how they died.

Suolun Shi gritted her teeth. She took out a mace from her storage pouch and viciously smashed the crawlers' heads in, crushing them into nothing.

When he sensed what she was doing, Zu An walked over and asked her, "What's wrong?"

"Even if their heads are removed, these crawlers can still shoot out their tongues to attack, and they can also spray poison. Back then, many of our people suffered because of that," Suolun Shi said through gritted teeth. There was hatred in her expression.

Zu An knew she had personally watched as her subordinates suffered a complete defeat, and that she had accumulated too much pressure. Letting her vent a bit was good too.

Suddenly, he looked in a certain direction and called out, "Show yourself!" With a wave of his hand, a terrifying suction force pulled a being through a wall it had been hiding behind.

At first, Suolun Shi thought it was a monster and rushed over while brandishing her mace, but when she saw who it was, she was stunned. It wasn't a monster at all, but rather someone dressed in the attire of a Fiend soldier. She exclaimed, "It's you?"

"I'm a survivor of the battlefield; I'm not a monster! Don't kill me!" the person hurriedly cried out as he waved his hands. This man was too terrifyingly strong! He didn't even see how the man had attacked, but then those dozens of crawlers had lost their heads. Meanwhile, he was so far away, and yet he had been pulled over so easily.



“Are you the Little Golden Peng King’s subordinate?” Suolun Shi asked, feeling as if the soldier was a bit familiar. Considering her status, she had interacted with the Little Golden Peng King and naturally recognized his people.

The soldier was overjoyed and immediately explained, “Yes, princess. This subordinate is the scout captain of the Little Golden Peng King’s troops, Wang Gu. I met the princess a few days ago.”

Zu An asked, “Why are you here? Are you a survivor of this place?” As he spoke, he sized up the soldier. This person was quite clean, without many battle scars.

Wang Gu said with an anxious expression, “The Little Golden Peng King heard that the Second Empress’ army was ambushed by monsters, so he sent me over to check on the situation and see if there were any survivors. There are dozens of brothers just like me who went in different directions. Now, it seems I am the only one who found the scene of the crime.”

Suolun Shi moved closer and said, “Big brother Zu, he is indeed the Little Peng King’s subordinate.”

Zu An secretly examined Wang Gu. There were no monsters attached to the man, so he let him go before asking, “Are these members of the Second Empress’ main army?”

Scout Captain Wang Gu replied, “That’s right, but according to the information we obtained, the remaining troops of the Second Empress broke out and left. They weren’t completely defeated.”

When he heard that, Zu An sighed in relief. As long as the Second Empress wasn’t dead, there was still a chance. He asked, “Where is the Second Empress right now?”

“This subordinate doesn’t know the details. I only know that they’ve broken out. As for which direction they went in, I’m not sure,” Wang Gu replied.

“Where is the Little Golden Peng King?” Zu An asked. Even if the scout captain didn’t know, there was no way that someone with the Little Golden Peng King’s status wouldn’t.

"Approximately two hundred miles northeast," Wang Gu said as he pointed in a direction.

"Take us there," Zu An said, thinking to himself that two hundred miles wasn't that far. He intended to check on the situation first.

"Understood!" Wang Gu hurriedly replied with a nod. Then, with a shake of his body, two pairs of wings suddenly appeared, and he soared into the air. He said, "Regent, princess, please follow me."

Zu An nodded. As one of the most talented scouts, Wang Gu naturally did have some ability. He casually held Suolun Shi's slender waist, then followed along.

When he saw that Suolun Shi didn't oppose the gesture in the slightest, Wang Gu was a bit surprised.

*Is Suolun Shi going to marry the regent? I must let the young master know about this crucial piece of information.*

Even though Wang Gu wasn't slow, he was still much slower than Zu An. However, Zu An didn't urge him to go faster, and instead took the time to sort out his thoughts. Since the beginning, he had sensed that some things were fishy. Now, he finally figured out where the problem lay.

At first, he'd been told that the Second Prince led his main army into the sealed land to fix the ancient seal, and thus finally put an end to the conflict. It was believed that no monsters had left the sealed land recently because the main forces had gone right into the enemies' home base. Primeval Iron City hadn't seen any signs of fighting.

So why were there monsters everywhere inside? Shouldn't they have been fighting fiercely against the Second Prince? After all, the army the Second Prince led was quite powerful. If they seized strategic positions, facing the monsters here should have been an evenly matched affair. Once he rushed in, there should have been no way for the battle to end quickly. How could the monsters have the chance to attack the reinforcements the Second Empress came in with?

Could it be that the Second Prince's army was already completely wiped out? Or had some incredibly powerful monster torn through the entire army? If so, why hadn't they left the sealed land?

Suddenly, he thought in surprise,

*Could it be that these guys did all this on purpose, deliberately using the pretext of requesting reinforcements to bring the Fiend races' army inside?*

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Chapter 2035: An Army? I Have One Too

By the time Zu An thought through things, he had already unknowingly arrived at a city. He could tell that this city had also been abandoned by the Fiend races' army in the past. After that, it was once more turned into an encampment by the Little Golden Peng King. Even looking at it from a distance, Zu An could tell that the arrangement and division of troops were clear, and the defenses were also solid. He nodded to himself and thought, *As expected of the Little Golden Peng King, one of the four great generals.*

The troops below also noticed their approach. All kinds of city siege crossbows and rune cannons were aimed at their party in the air.

Wang Gu said, "Regent, princess, I'll head down to contact them first."

Zu An nodded, and Wang Gu quickly flew down.

Suolun Shi said, "Big brother Zu, we can invite the Little Golden Peng King to help us rescue the Second Empress. Our chances of success will be greater then."

Zu An gave the city below a look, saying, "They may not be willing to do that."

Suolun Shi was stunned, asking, "What do you mean?"

She suddenly thought back to when Zu An had mentioned how strange it was for the Little Golden Peng King to suggest dividing the troops.

*Could it be that...*

Suddenly, Zu An's eyes narrowed. He exclaimed, "Be careful!"

As soon as he spoke, he grabbed her by the waist and dodged off to the side. At almost the same time, dozens of thick city siege crossbow arrows flickering

with runes fired at the location they had been in. This kind of arrow could directly blast through city walls, let alone human flesh.

Suolun Shi's face turned deathly pale. She exclaimed, "Has the Little Golden Peng King gone mad?"

"He hasn't. It's just that he's decided to drop his act," Zu An said with a sneer. He looked at the young man in golden armor standing on the platform in the center of the city.

"As expected of the regent. Not even this kind of vicious ambush could injure you in the slightest," the Little Golden Peng King said with a smile. His voice wasn't loud, yet it was clearly audible even amid the snowstorm. His cultivation was clearly quite high.

"Why?" Suolun Shi suddenly shouted angrily, "You have a venerable status, and your clan has enjoyed honor and wealth for generations. Why have you betrayed the Second Empress and brought harm to countless Fiend race citizens?"

When she first listened to Zu An's analysis, even though she had held some doubts, she and the Little Golden Peng King had grown up together and had similar levels of status. That was why they had easily become friends. She hadn't believed that the Little Golden Peng King would do something like this.

"Why?" the Little Golden Peng King repeated, his expression turning cold. "My father remained faithful and true to the Fiend races, and yet, what did he get in return in the end? All because they were a bit scared of him, he was killed for no reason by the Fiend Emperor, and worst of all, we weren't even allowed to get angry and we had to pretend to be deeply grateful to the ruler!" He looked a bit agitated as he yelled, "We are the glorious Golden Peng Race, not mere dogs!"

"The late Fiend Emperor was indeed wrong in this matter, but he is already dead. Even if you have any grudges, they should be in the past. Was it just because of this that you betrayed the Second Empress and the other clans? Those monsters are from other worlds. If they really end up invading, do you think you'll be able to survive?" Suolun Shi asked, finding that a bit hard to understand.

“What do you understand?” The Little Golden Peng King sneered. “They’re called monsters, and we’re called fiends. Don’t you feel that our names share a bit of resemblance?”

Suolun Shi was momentarily stunned, asking, “What do you mean?”

The Little Golden Peng King stood with his hands behind him. As he looked into the sky, his eyes were full of yearning as he said, “I only learned of this recently. We fiends and the monsters from a different world actually share the same ancestor. The same blood flows through us.”

Zu An and Suolun Shi were both speechless.

“You’ve gone mad. How could we be the same species as those disgusting creatures?” Suolun Shi exclaimed. Those monsters dripping with mucus were still fresh in her memory. They were as disgusting as disgusting could be. If she was the same as them, then she really would rather be dead.

“We are naturally different from those low-level monsters; we have a high-level bloodline. Regent, you’ve probably seen the high level monsters, right? They are all incredibly powerful beings!” the Little Golden Peng King said excitedly.

Zu An said indifferently, “I have seen them before, but they are all strange and grotesquely-shaped creatures. They aren’t as pleasing to look at as the fiends on this side.”

“We also have our original forms. If we remained in those forms, the humans naturally wouldn’t like us.” The Little Golden Peng King didn’t pay him any more attention, and instead reached out to Suolun Shi, saying, “Little sister Suolun, we should be together. Join us; our future lies in the stars above. How insignificant is a small world like this?”

However, no one expected Suolun Shi to sigh and take out her mace, saying, “My subordinates were killed because of you. I haven’t even gotten vengeance for them yet, so how can I join up with you?”

“Pigheaded. Kill them!” the Little Golden Peng King snapped, losing his patience when he saw her resolute expression. With a wave of his hand, countless skills shone from the army in the city and fired at the two of them.

Zu An grabbed Suolun Shi. In order to evade the continuous streaks of light, he moved as fast as lightning. However, there was an entire army beneath them, so the attacks were innumerable. All kinds of attacks came in from all different directions. The usual strategies, such as evasion, baiting, and exploiting weaknesses, were completely useless. That was also one of the reasons why it was so difficult for an individual cultivator to face a proper army.

When he saw that even though Zu An was fast, he still couldn't deal with the army's attacks that covered the entire sky and had to take some with his own body several times, the Little Golden Peng King smiled. He said, "Regent, even though your cultivation is high, in front of an entire army, your strength is still too insignificant."

All of his troops were elites, and he was one of the Fiend races' four great generals, so his commanding ability allowed the army to display even more of their power. There was no way he would give Zu An any chances. He thus planned to wear down Zu An just like that. After all, no matter how powerful the enemy's attacks were, if they were split among ten thousand people, they would still be survivable. These soldiers were weak individually, but through sheer force of numbers, they were still capable of threatening strong cultivators.

Suolun Shi did her best to block the attacks below to share in Zu An's burden. She said, "Big brother Zu, you don't need to care about me. Use this chance to get away! There is no way his army can move out immediately. You will be able to find a chance to kill your way back."

"I don't have the habit of abandoning my comrades," Zu An said calmly.

"Even so, in front of a fully prepared army, the power of a single person is limited!" Suolun Shi exclaimed, panicking. As a member of the Demon race's upper echelons, she knew the advantage an army had against a single cultivator fully well.

"An army? I have one too," Zu An said with a chuckle.

Suolun Shi was stunned. Then, she sensed water-like ripples appear in the air. After that, a large group of strange metal birds appeared from those ripples. Some of them were flat and sleek, entirely black like falcons, while others were huge in size and entirely white like swans...

“What are those?” the Little Golden Peng King wondered.

He was stunned, but he instinctively sensed the danger behind these things. He quickly ordered his subordinates to shoot at the metal birds first. And yet, the metal birds flew too high, reaching tens of thousands of meters in the air, and they flew extremely fast. It was difficult for the army’s attacks to hit such things.

Suddenly, the metal birds seemed to lay eggs. Rows of unknown things emerged from their bellies and dropped on the Little Golden Peng King’s army. As they listened to the shrill screams on the wind, the soldiers didn’t even need the Little Golden Peng King’s orders to fire at the spherical things.

*Boom!*

Streaks of blinding flames erupted in the sky. Terrifying blasts of air engulfed the entire ruined city. At first, the army’s defensive formation could still withstand the shockwaves, but as more and more bombs dropped, their formation could no longer withstand the damage. Cracks appeared one after another. Finally, it broke apart completely, and the entire city turned into a sea of flames and tremors. The Little Golden Peng King’s army could no longer remain organized. They screamed as they ran in all directions.

Zu An thought to himself, *How could these soldiers possibly be able to withstand the power of the B-2 paired with the Tupolev Tu-160?*

Suolun Shi’s jaw never closed after it initially fell. Her beautiful eyes were full of shock.

*What in the world is this? How does big brother Zu still have so many different things?*

When he saw that his impressive army of elites had been utterly defeated in a second, the Little Golden Peng King almost broke down. He turned into a streak of golden light and cut across the sky. Wherever he went, those strange metal birds broke down and exploded one after another.

Zu An’s expression turned cold. He vanished, then grabbed at the golden light.

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#### Chapter 2036: How Can He Have One?

The Fiend races had countless powerful individuals, and every race had special talents that made it difficult to say for certain which one was stronger than another. However, in terms of movement abilities, there were two races that were publicly acknowledged to have the fastest ones. One was the Golden Crow Radiant Flow, and the other was the Invincible Heavenly Peng. In the past, even the late Fiend Emperor had acknowledged that in terms of pure movement ability, even the Golden Crow Radiant Flow was a bit slower than the Invincible Heavenly Peng.

Even so, with Zu An's current cultivation, he didn't need any movement ability at all. Just by lifting his leg and taking a step, he could cross ten thousand meters. He was extremely accurate and immediately grabbed at the golden light.

The Little Golden Peng King was horrified, but he suddenly became thirty percent faster, forcibly changing directions to dodge to one side. However, Zu An seemed to have already anticipated the move. He activated Grandgale's teleportation ability. Regardless of how his opponent changed directions, he was always right behind.

Finally, he seized an opportunity and grabbed toward his opponent. At the same time, he activated the Heaven Devouring Sutra, which seemed to suck in the space in that area itself, leaving the Little Golden Peng King with no place to run at all.

Suddenly, a loud and clear bird's cry filled the air. A giant Heavenly Peng projection rushed out from the Little Golden Peng King's body, and with a flap of that projection's wings, the surrounding space collapsed, allowing it to break free from Zu An's Heaven Devouring Sutra. It took the Little Golden Peng King ten thousand meters away.

Suolun Shi, who was watching from below, revealed a look of shock. She exclaimed, "Earth immortal?"

In that instant, a powerful ki field erupted. Even at such a distance, she could sense how terrifying it was. The only thing she felt apart from shock was



numbness. She had once been quite close to the Little Golden Peng King, so she naturally knew about his cultivation. Even though it was a bit higher than hers, there was a limit to that; at most, it should have been a grade or two higher. But why had he immediately shot up to the earth immortal rank? It was comparable to the Fiend Emperor's power! Was there something wrong with the world today somehow?

The Little Golden Peng King stretched out his neck and looked at the massive Heavenly Peng behind him. He was a bit excited as he said, "You guys kept saying that those monsters were lying to me, but I am no three-year-old child! How could I not know if they fooled me?"

"This is the power that lies within the Golden Peng Race's bloodline, and it was fully released through an ancient hidden method. With this Heavenly Peng Incarnation, there would be nothing to fear even if Zhao Han or the Fiend Emperor came back to life!"

Zu An examined his opponent for a bit. The Heavenly Peng behind him was especially big, and its entire figure was surging with demonic flames. Just a single wing reached ten kilometers in length. Every feather was vivid and lifelike, making it hard to tell if it was a projection or a tangible form.

"Bloodline power, you say..." Zu An muttered grimly.

It seemed the Little Golden Peng King's words really were true! There was a certain connection between this world's Fiend races and the foreign monsters. That made things more tricky. At first, there had been a good chance that the humans and fiends could fight together against the monsters' invasion. However, if the Fiend races were tempted to switch sides, perhaps this world would really be finished!

Suddenly, the Heavenly Peng Incarnation moved its wings. Countless terrifying tornadoes appeared in the world. The bomber planes in the sky were quickly blown around in the winds before being torn to shreds.

The Little Golden Peng King grinned. He looked at his hands and murmured "Is this the feeling of power? The feeling of being the most powerful in the entire world? It's just too amazing."

The terrifying tornadoes had already begun sweeping toward Zu An. They were so powerful, they could probably tear the flesh right off a grandmaster's body.

*Ding!*

The sound of a Buddhist bell filled the air. A massive golden bell appeared around Zu An. Sanskrit chants surrounded it, blocking all of the roaring tornadoes outside.

“Why is Tranquility Temple’s Tranquility Bell in your hands?” the Little Golden Peng King asked in shock. With his status, he knew quite a few things, and naturally recognized the origins of this item.

Even so, there was naturally no need for Zu An to explain to him that it was just a weapon from the Rune Weapon Chart. With a wave of his hand, the Tranquility Bell rang again. Invisible sound waves rippled outward, and the terrifying tornadoes disappeared.

“Hmph, even if you have that bell, so what? Without an incarnation of your own, how could you possibly be my opponent?” the Little Golden Peng King said; he then actually merged with the incarnation behind him, both halves actually becoming one.

The Heavenly Peng projection became even more solid. As it swooped down toward Zu An, a red glint flickered through its eyes. Even though it was massive, it didn’t seem heavy and clumsy at all. On the contrary, it instantly appeared in front of Zu An like a flash of lightning. Two terrifying giant claws, each dozens of meters long, grabbed at the golden bell canopy around him, shattering it in barely an instant. A claw then grabbed at Zu An in the middle.

It was rumored that in ancient times, the Heavenly Peng had preyed upon giant dragons. Their claws could instantly seize the lives of dragons, creatures that were famous for their physical defenses. How could a human withstand such power?

Suolun Shi panicked. She wanted to warn Zu An to be careful, but that Heavenly Peng was just too fast. She was just about to speak out when the terrifying claw grabbed Zu An, immediately tearing him to pieces.

“Ahh!” She couldn’t help but scream. She felt as if her entire body had fallen into a frozen cave.

However, the Heavenly Peng didn’t show any sign of happiness. On the contrary, it dodged to the side to avoid a streak of incisive sword ki. It suddenly turned to the other side.

There, Zu An was floating in the sky, saying with a sigh of admiration, "This Heavenly Peng Incarnation of yours is indeed impressive."

The Heavenly Peng spoke, but it was with the Little Golden Peng King's voice. "How could low-level creatures like you understand the power of an incarnation? Without this ability to fight against us, there is no way you can defeat me."

"Oh? Who says I don't have one?" Zu An replied with a chuckle. With a wave of his hand, a steel giant dozens of meters tall slowly walked out from the void. The steel giant was entirely white with eight blue wings behind it. It had a unique aesthetic of beauty.

The Little Golden Peng King was stunned and couldn't help but ask, "What is this thing?"

"Gundam," Zu An replied, a reminiscent look appearing in his eyes. "Strike Freedom Gundam!"

*I really miss the days when I watched Gundam, balthough boss Kira seemed to like stealing his friends' fiances...*

"What kind of stupid name is that?" the Little Golden Peng King remarked, finding the word ridiculous. "Hmph, do you really think that compared to my Heavenly Peng, this thing of yours can be considered an incarnation?"

Even the distant Suolun Shi had to admit that this Gundam or something looked really handsome, but it paled in comparison to the Heavenly Peng. It wasn't even on the same scale.

"Whether it is or not, won't we find out once we fight? It's not something that can be decided through a debate," Zu An said; just like that, the wings behind Strike Freedom Gundam fully spread out.

"Then I will let you experience exactly what despair is," the Heavenly Peng said, then moved its wings and charged at the Gundam. It planned to immediately crush the giant to death right from the get-go.

However, a streak of light flashed past, and the Heavenly Peng discovered that it had actually missed. From the Gundam's wings came a strange, intangible form that took the shape of wings of light. The Gundam was so fast and nimble that it was completely outside of his predictions!

The Heavenly Peng harrumphed and charged again. Its strongest aspect was none other than its speed. However, no matter how it attacked, the Gundam was always as crafty as a fly, dodging at all kinds of strange angles. It finally realized that its body was too large. Against a small creature like this, it couldn't cut corners as quickly as its nimble opponent.

"You've truly angered me now," the Heavenly Peng said, then gave up on charging. Instead, it spread its wings and every single feather shot into the air. A second later, they turned into a golden rain of arrows that instantly engulfed everything within a kilometer of its opponent. No matter how fast and nimble the Gundam was, it couldn't avoid such a saturated attack.

Sure enough, after evading a few times, the Strike Freedom Gundam couldn't dodge anymore. Suddenly, however, its wings spread out and turned into several cannon barrels. They fired streaks of laser beams that accurately blasted away the incoming feathers. Then, the two cannons in its hands activated at full force, forcibly creating a safe space.

The Heavenly Peng's eyes narrowed. It used the chance to immediately close the distance. Its wings sliced down on the Gundam like a blade that could cleave space itself.

Meanwhile, the Strike Freedom Gundam was facing the feather arrows and lost much of its mobility. It hurriedly dodged to the side, but its wing cannons were immediately sliced to pieces.

The Heavenly Peng didn't give the Gundam any chance to leave. It gave chase, planting a pair of claws on the mecha's body. However, the Gundam suddenly produced a shield of light to block the attack. Then, it decided to retract the cannons in its hands. It drew two red beam sabers from its waist and quickly sliced open several-meter-long wounds on the Heavenly Peng's claws that reached all the way to its bones.

"What kind of swords are those? Why are they so sharp?!" the Heavenly Peng exclaimed, panicking. If not for the fact that its claws were too large, this attack alone could have already sliced its claws straight off!

Its body's defensive abilities were already incredibly strong. It was near impossible for normal blades to wound it! Thus, it became more and more worried. It didn't want to give Zu An any more chances and decided that it had to kill him as quickly as possible.

A demonic flame erupted around its entire body. Then, as if a massive black hole appeared in its mouth, it inhaled in the Strike Freedom Gundam's direction. The Strike Freedom Gundam staggered under the terrifying suction force, unable to maintain its center of gravity anymore. A sinister glint appeared in the Heavenly Peng's eyes; it would soon fully devour the enemy's incarnation.

Suddenly, a streak of light fired out. It was so fast that it didn't have the chance to react at all.

"The Sun Slaying Bow!" the Heavenly Peng exclaimed, shivering all over. The next second, however, its brain was already blasted open.

Zu An lowered the flickering Sun Slaying Bow and remarked with a sigh, "Did you think I was really competing with you in incarnations? It was just a distraction."

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Chapter 2037: Reunited

From the moment he first witnessed the Heavenly Peng's strength, Zu An had already known that it would be hard to win without using a divine weapon. Furthermore, against this kind of bird, the most suitable weapon was none other than the Sun Slaying Bow. However, the Heavenly Peng was way too fast, so locking onto it was almost impossible.

That was why Zu An had used the Rune Weapon Chart to create the famous Strike Freedom Gundam to act as his own incarnation. He had even entered the gundam's cockpit in front of the opponent's face. In the Little Golden Peng King's eyes, that was the same as becoming one with the gundam, so he hadn't suspected anything at all.

Meanwhile, Zu An had secretly used his exchange skill that allowed him to swap positions with any tangible thing within the range of his divine sense. He had hidden in the dark and used the Strike Freedom Gundam to draw the Heavenly Peng's attention, then finally found an opening and took him down.

The Sun Slaying Bow's power went without saying. Even though the Heavenly Peng's massive size made it look as if it could even cover the sun itself, it had

died instantly after having its head blown apart. Then, the incarnation disappeared. The Little Golden Peng King fell heavily to the ground. Perhaps it was because the incarnation took most of the damage, but his head was still fine. Even so, blood was flowing out from every orifice, and all of his bones were broken. It was obvious that he wouldn't survive.

Zu An flew above him and stared at him coldly.

"The Sun Slaying Bow lives up to its name, as expected," the Little Golden Peng King said while coughing out several mouthfuls of blood.

"Little Golden Peng King, why did you have to do all of this?" Suolun Shi asked as she rushed over as well. When she saw her former good friend end up in such a state, she couldn't help but sigh deeply.

"Are you pitying me? It's hard to say which one of us needs to be pitied," the Little Golden Peng King said angrily. "Are you not confused as to why none of the Demon race's reinforcements have arrived, even though it has been so long?"

"What do you mean?" Suolun Shi asked as her expression changed.

"Pitiful." The Little Golden Peng King gave her a look and said mockingly, "Those reinforcements aren't coming. They were used as chess pieces without even knowing it."

Suolun Shi's entire body trembled, her face extremely pale. That was something she had suspected, but she hadn't felt as if it made sense. That was why such thoughts had disappeared as soon as they came up. Now that he was saying such a thing, though, could it be...

"Where are the Second Empress and the others?" Zu An asked gravely.

"Do you think I'll tell you?" the Little Golden Peng King replied, his expression surprisingly calm. His life was already over anyway, so what did he have left to fear?

"I have many ways to make you speak, but I still want you to tell me yourself," Zu An said, giving him a look. "Do you not want revenge? If I try to save the Second Empress, her situation should be the most dangerous, so there's a high chance that I'll die there."

The Little Golden Peng King was briefly stunned, but then he laughed bitterly and said, "The regent really is a talent after all. I have to admit that what you say carries reason. I guess it's fine to tell you. The Second Empress should be around four thousand kilometers out, by Qielu Snowfield. As for whether they've managed to bring their troops into the nearby city to protect themselves, that, I do not know."

"Your respected self does have a lofty spirit," Zu An said with a nod. "May I ask how many people have awakened their ancestral bloodline power like you have?"

The Heavenly Peng was indeed a bit tricky. If many people had awakened such an ability, that would really be a bit hard to defeat.

The Little Golden Peng King looked at him with an ambiguous smile, replying, "How many cultivators do you think can resist the temptation to become stronger?"

Zu An's mood sank. The situation didn't look optimistic.

The Little Golden Peng King raised his head to the sky, and the expression in his eyes slackened. He said, "How hateful it is that I wasn't able to achieve my magnificent aspiration, and I can't get revenge myself either..." His voice became quieter and quieter, and his eyes remained wide open as he breathed his last.

Zu An's expression turned cold.

*This guy is brave for trying to get revenge for his father, but the fact that he was the cause for so many deaths in the Fiend races makes him not worth pitying.*

The Little Golden Peng King's troops had been utterly defeated by the bombers. Now that they saw their war god of a leader defeated as well, they completely collapsed. The remaining troops dispersed in confusion. Zu An knew that these people merely followed orders, so he didn't hunt them down.

Suolun Shi, however, stared at one of them. She screamed and her mace flew over, blasting the soldier into a meat pancake. He was none other than the scout Wang Gu, who had drawn them here.

After that strike, Suolun Shi seemed to have vented out a bit of her frustrations. She moved over to Zu An's side and said apologetically, "I fear I cannot accompany you to the Second Empress' side."

"Are you going to return to the Demon race?" Zu An asked. He had an idea of what she wanted to do.

Suolun Shi voiced her agreement. "After hearing what the Little Golden Peng King said, I need to go back and take a look, to warn my clan's people not to fall for their tricks."

Zu An thought to himself, *It might already be a bit late to go back now*. However, if she wasn't at least allowed to try, perhaps she wouldn't be able to resign herself. He said seriously, "Then you need to be careful. The Demon race might have already completely changed."

Suolun Shi smiled in distress, saying, "After everything I've already gone through, if I could still afford to be so ignorant, I would really deserve to just die. Thank you for saving me, big brother Zu; I will repay this favor in the future."

Zu An smiled and said, "If you can really prevent the Demon race from acting up, that might be the best repayment."

"I will do my best!" Suolun Shi replied and bit her lip, seemingly setting her resolve.

Zu An was startled and said, "Please don't act too rashly! If the situation calls for it, try to withdraw and find me as quickly as possible."

Suolun Shi smiled and said, "Thank you for your concern, big brother Zu!"

Zu An thought for a bit, then gave her a flying sword talisman. He then taught her how to use it before bidding her goodbye.

Suolun Shi quietly stood in the wind and snow as she watched Zu An shoot into the sky and quickly vanish. A reluctant expression appeared on her charming face. Even so, that expression soon turned to decisiveness. She wrapped her coat closer around herself and resolutely turned around toward the exit of the sealed land. She had to contact her companions from the Demon race as quickly as possible, so the Little Golden Peng King's tragedy wouldn't repeat itself.



...

Meanwhile, Zu An continued to fly into the depths. He had some impression of Qielu Snowfield. That was an area that was at a bit of a higher elevation. That had once been a place the Fiend races defended, but it had been taken over by monsters thousands of years ago. He had never expected the Second Empress' group to have actually already gotten in so far.

"Could it be that the monsters didn't attack them, to deliberately bait them deeper in..." He was a bit confused, but he suddenly realized something. Even someone like the Little Golden Peng King had changed sides and become so powerful without anyone knowing, so it made sense for the Second Empress' group to have been duped without any knowledge of it.

After flying for a long time, he noticed something. He noticed a wave of ki rippling from up ahead, and there was a mysteriously familiar feeling to it. He didn't dare to be too slow and quickly flew in that direction. Soon, he could vaguely hear some strange laughter that was especially ear-piercing. It made one's blood run cold and felt extremely uncomfortable.

Finally, countless figures appeared in the distance. Countless monsters were surrounding and attacking a few people in the midst of a snow valley.

A white-clad young lady attacked the surrounding monsters while saying urgently, "Clan leader, we will protect you! Hurry and run!" She was extremely beautiful, but compared to the pink-clad woman next to her, she couldn't help but pale a bit in comparison.

The pink-clad woman had a charm and temperament that was hard for a young lady to match. Her gaze was ice-cold as she replied, "How could you possibly cover for me? It would be better for me to protect you two, and for the two of you to find the regent as quickly as possible to tell him what happened."

All kinds of long painting scrolls flew out as she spoke, trapping many monsters within. However, there were just too many monsters, and she had already used as many painting scrolls as she could. It was clear that many were about to break out.

A miserable scream suddenly filled the air. It turned out several thin-skinned monsters had broken out of their range of encirclement, and one latched onto

an elder. He screamed, and his flesh shriveled up at a visible rate. Meanwhile, the monster's body became completely red, and it swelled in size.

“Elder Zhu!” the blue-clad young lady screamed.

The pink-clad woman was shocked and furious. Her hair spread out in all directions, each end turning into a thin, hissing snake. Soon after, wherever the snakes' eyes went, the thin-skinned monsters were petrified. In the end, the one that clung onto Elder Zhu couldn't hold on and fell to the ground, shattering to pieces. Unfortunately, Elder Zhu had already become a shriveled corpse. All of his life force had already been sucked dry.

The pink-clad woman suddenly coughed out a mouthful of blood. She staggered unsteadily, and her head of thin snakes also became dispirited. In her moment of weakness, the monsters pounced. Countless thin-skinned monsters flew over to surround the three women.

While the three women were in despair, a resplendent streak of sword ki appeared from the horizon. The thin-skinned monsters were like candles before a flame, screaming as they disappeared into nothing.

“Ah Zu!” the pink-clad woman exclaimed, shocked and overjoyed. The sword was just too familiar. However, she had already used up all of her strength. She could no longer stand steadily and fell to one side.

Just then, a figure appeared at her side and took her waist into his arms. His other hand held a longsword, erasing all of the approaching monsters from existence.

The white and blue-clad young ladies saw who had arrived. Both of them were surprised and extremely happy.

“Big brother Zu!”

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## Chapter 2038: One-Man Reinforcement Army

The three women were Yu Yanluo, Little White, and Little Blue. Zu An hadn't expected to just run into them like this in the middle of the boundless snowfield.

Yu Yanluo was also shocked and happy. She gently called out, "Ah Zu~" The Medusa Queen's viciousness from a moment ago was nowhere to be seen!

There was no time to reminisce, however. The Tai'e Sword in Zu An's hands moved intricately sending hundred-meter-long streaks of resplendent sword ki everywhere to behead group after group of monsters.

The young ladies' eyes were full of shock. These monsters they had felt helpless against were being chopped to pieces in batches like chives! Even the thin-skinned monsters that were the toughest to deal with couldn't withstand a single attack from Zu An's sword ki.

Right now, Zu An was focused on saving people, which was why he took out his divine weapon. With his cultivation and a divine weapon, how could the power he displayed be something these monsters could possibly resist?

Again and again, large groups of monsters died all around them. The remaining monsters were left feeling a bit scared. Even though they didn't have intelligence and moved based on their instincts, they could clearly sense just how terrifying the new human was.

*That's definitely not food! We're actually the prey in his eyes.*

Soon after, all of the monsters tacitly decided to run away in alarm. However, Zu An unleashed dozens of streaks of sword ki, erasing another large batch of monsters. Only a few managed to get away successfully.

He sighed in regret. Due to the inherent ceiling of the world's origin, his cultivation rank seemed to have already reached a bottleneck, stopping at level 76. Otherwise, the monsters he had slaughtered as of late could have been enough for him to climb another level.

Fortunately, even though he couldn't increase his cultivation rank, the Kun Peng and Heaven Devouring Sutra replenished his ki through the killing of monsters. From start to finish, he never felt tired at all, and didn't have to fight painstakingly like the others only to eventually die from exhaustion. That was

why, even though he had used the Rune Weapon Chart to summon all kinds of weapons, he still wasn't sucked dry.

Only when the monsters all left did Zu An look at the woman in his arms. Her beautiful face was especially pale. He couldn't help but ask worriedly, "Are you hurt?"

Yu Yanluo's injuries weren't light. Even though her life wasn't in danger, it wasn't that far off.

"Clan leader frequently used her bloodline power to fight against the monsters. Her consumption of energy has been really great," the white-clad young lady said.

"Little White, so many brothers and sisters from the clan have fallen in battle. My bit of fatigue is nothing," Yu Yanluo said; a strong sense of grief filled her beautiful eyes.

Little Blue looked at the shriveled corpse and said, "The most regretful one was Elder Zhu. If he had just persisted for a bit longer, big brother Zu would've already arrived."

Yu Yanluo looked at him with a sentimental expression, saying, "If not for Elder Zhu risking his life to save us, we might not have been able to last until this moment."

Zu An was also filled with sadness. Whether it was the time he had saved Suolun Shi or this time, he had arrived a bit too late, which resulted in people dying.

He thought for a bit, then proposed, "Let's bring his corpse back to be buried properly in the Snake race's territory and offer compensation to his family. Build a monument for him as well, for the Snake race to eternally pass down his heroic deeds."

Yu Yanluo nodded and said, "That's all we can do. Apart from Elder Zhu, many brave warriors also sacrificed their lives here. I will also show them the glory and honor they deserve."

"Clan leader is wise and virtuous!" Little White and Little Blue exclaimed, bowing respectfully.

Zu An used the chance to ask, "Why are you all here? What exactly happened recently?"

Yu Yanluo sighed deeply, saying, "It seems we fell for the Second Prince's ploy."

Zu An wasn't surprised to hear that, as he had already reached the same conclusion.

Yu Yanluo continued, "The Second Prince didn't wish to fight bitterly against the monsters, but instead, already colluded with the monsters a long time ago. The pretext of 'advancing into the sealed land' was nothing more than a ruse to draw in the elites from the various races, to take us all out in one go."

"Besides that, many other tribes have likely already colluded with the monsters," Zu An added.

"How do you know that?" Yu Yanluo asked in surprise.

Zu An told her what had happened with the Little Golden Peng King.

"Hmph, and to think we actually used to adore him," Little Blue said angrily, seeming really unhappy.

Little White snuck Zu An a look, then quickly added, "That was before we met big brother Zu."

Little Blue was stunned. She quickly nodded in agreement.

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle. The Little Golden Peng King's status was respected, and he had been handsome too. He was even one of the Fiend races' four great generals, so it wasn't surprising for him to be the target of many young ladies' admiration.

Yu Yanluo also sighed and said, "I never expected the Little Golden Peng King to fall into a state like that. Even so, compared to the tragedy he created, all of this is something he brought upon himself."

"This time, out of the Fiend races' main forces, the Elf race stayed behind in the King Court, and the Peacock Wise King stayed behind in Primeval Iron City as backup. The Second Prince led the army in rebellion, and the Golden Peng race committed betrayal. Now that the Demon race's army still hasn't

arrived, if I am not mistaken, a huge problem likely happened among the Demon race. The Scorpion King and Flying Leopard King's troops still haven't arrived at Primeval Iron City either, and there are rumors that the two have also defected. Additionally, the Lion race and the Hyena race... There are quite a few among them who have also defected. There are even traitors among the Golden Crow race."

Zu An was shocked to hear that. He said, "The fact that you still haven't been completely wiped out even in this kind of situation is a miracle in itself."

"It is actually thanks to the Second Empress. If not for her commands being excellent as she decisively led the troops to charge into the depths of the sealed land, we might have already been completely trapped in the encirclement prepared by the monsters and completely slaughtered," Yu Yanluo said, her voice full of admiration.

Zu An was stunned. No wonder no monsters had emerged from the sealed land. So it turned out they were all busy chasing after the Second Empress. He had never expected that charming woman to have this other side to her.

As if guessing his thoughts, Yu Yanluo teased, "If the Second Empress is able to safely return, she should be able to rely on her own prestige to secure the young Fiend Emperor's position. She will no longer require your help."

"Isn't that even better?" Zu An replied happily. In the past, the reason why the Second Empress hadn't been able to fully display her talents was because everyone treated her as a pretty decoration without any skills. Now that she had shown her competence, it was almost as if she could now live as her true self.

Yu Yanluo had initially wanted to say 'are you not scared that she will no longer be fond of you anymore?', but after thinking about the current situation, she figured that such words were already quite meaningless. She changed her mind and said, "Eventually, the Second Empress suffered defeat after defeat before running to Qielu Snowfield. She found the Mente City recorded in legends and used it to fend off the encirclement of countless monsters.

"However, her side all knew that if things went on much longer, it would eventually result in their loss. That was why she absolutely needed reinforcements. Furthermore, after the series of betrayals she experienced, I was the only one she could trust. That was why the task of breaking out and seeking reinforcements fell to us."

Zu An was stunned, asking, "The one she trusts the most is you?"

Yu Yanluo smiled and said, "In the end, you are the reason for that. She thought I still didn't know about your relationship and continued to put on all kinds of acts. She really thought I couldn't figure out the reason why she trusted me."

Little White's mouth was wide open.

*Did I just hear some incredible gossip I shouldn't have heard just now?*

Little Blue, in contrast, had a 'that's only natural' expression on her face.

*As expected of big brother Zu, the only man even my throat can't handle. Isn't taking care of the Second Empress easy enough?*

Zu An's face heated up. He coughed and said, "Now that you've found me, your mission is already complete. Return to Primeval Iron City first."

Yu Yanluo was stunned, asking, "You're not going back with us?"

Zu An shook his head, saying, "Speed is a crucial asset in war. The Mente City the Second Empress is defending might have already fallen. I must hurry to rescue them as quickly as possible."

"But what can you do by yourself? I think we should return to Primeval Iron City to gather reinforcements. That was the Second Empress' plan..." Yu Yanluo hurriedly said.

Zu An smiled and said, "I alone am equivalent to a great army." Even though his voice seemed calm, there was a mysterious power behind his words.

Yu Yanluo became briefly absentminded, while Little White and Little Blue's heart rates quickened.

"Then I'll go with you," Yu Yanluo said. She had experienced all kinds of situations, so she immediately calmed down.

"Your injuries are too severe and, you wouldn't be able to offer much help even if you returned with me. I would only end up being distracted taking care of you. You should return to Primeval Iron City and quickly report all of the intelligence you have," Zu An said. When he saw that she wanted to say something else, he said to the other two young ladies, "Little White and Little

Blue, I'll give the two of you a mission too. Safely escort her back to Primeval Iron City. Can you do this?"

"We can!" Little White replied as she reflexively stuck out her chest, seeming to have gained newfound confidence.

In contrast, Little Blue moved closer to him with a smile and asked, "Then what kind of reward will big brother Zu give us after?"

"What kind of reward do you want?" Zu An asked, stunned.

Little Blue licked her lips and said, "The same as last time."

When those words were spoken, Little White was a bit confused, but Yu Yanluo looked at the two of them with a strange expression.

Zu An was speechless.

*This little fiend is completely different from young human ladies, as expected.*

Zu An quickly took out a pile of defensive magical treasures to give to their group, saying, "Even though I've already cleaned out the monsters along the way, take these with you just in case."

*Please don't continue that topic! I don't want to be treated as a pervert!*

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Chapter 2039: A Million Monsters

Little White couldn't help but give Little Blue a few extra looks.

*Does she share a secret with big brother Zu that I don't know about? Huh, when did I fall behind?*

Yu Yanluo wasn't in the mood to pursue jealousy right now; she was too worried about her lover's safety. Thus, she asked, "Ah Zu, are you really sure you want to do this?"

Zu An recalled the fate of certain death that had resulted from his divination. He couldn't help but feel a bit gloomy as well, but he replied, "Don't worry, I'm



really strong now. It's fine." It was because there were so many unknown dangers that he didn't want Yu Yanluo to take risks alongside him in her current state.

"I guess it's fine. I won't be dragging you down then. Instead, I'll return to Primeval Iron City as quickly as possible to gather reinforcements," Yu Yanluo said. After all, she was a mature woman with sufficient wisdom. She knew she would only waste his energy on taking care of her if she went along.

Zu An appreciated that about her. He took her firmly into his arms.

"Take care of yourself!" Yu Yanluo said, feeling a bit sad. For the first time ever, she had heard a bit of uncertainty in her lover's voice.

"You need to pay attention to your safety as well," Zu An warned them, then kicked off and shot into the sky.

Yu Yanluo stood amid the wind and snow, absentmindedly staring at his back. She didn't want to leave for quite a long while.

Little White was a bit confused, asking, "Clan leader, if you're so reluctant, why didn't you go with big brother Zu?"

Yu Yanluo smiled and replied, "You're still young, but you'll understand in the future. Let's hurry back. I hope we can reach the exit safely."

Little White and Little Blue shivered inwardly. If they encountered those monsters again, it really could be a bit dangerous.

"Don't worry, big brother Zu gave us so many defensive runes and formations. Clan leader, big brother Zu really is good to you," Little Blue said with a sigh of amazement.

"I think now's a good time for you to talk about what's going on with that reward of yours," Yu Yanluo said, looking at her with an ambiguous smile.

"Exactly! Just what kind of secret do you have with big brother Zu?" Little White asked, looking at her little sister in confusion.

"Ah! I was joking..." Little Blue replied as her cheeks turned red.

*But that was really fun... It was like sucking on a lollipop.*

“Hmph, you’re clearly hiding things from me. Hurry and tell me!” Little White exclaimed, impatiently tugging on her sister's face. The sisters quickly began to fight with each other.

When she saw the two fighting playfully, Yu Yanluo smiled warmly.

Waves of cold wind suddenly blew over them. She reflexively pulled her coat closer around her. She was scared of the cold the most, so this icy environment was extremely uncomfortable for her. She looked at the blurry path ahead of her, murmuring, “I hope we can reach the exit safely...”

But sometimes, what one feared the most just had to show up. Two hours later, the trio suddenly stopped. One after another, dark figures appeared in the wind and snow, quickly surrounding their party.

Little White and Little Blue’s expressions changed. They quickly took out the formations and talismans Zu An had given them to prepare for battle.

However, Yu Yanluo stopped them and said, “There’s no need.” The sisters looked at her in confusion. Yu Yanluo sighed and continued, “Those might be useful against a small group of monsters, but against the Second Prince’s elites, all of our efforts are futile.”

A clear and bright laugh filled the air, and a voice called out, “As expected of the Medusa Queen. This level of temperament truly is worthy of respect.”

Soon after, a young man in golden armor appeared while riding on an impressive beast. He looked a bit like the late Fiend Emperor, but his features were younger and he looked more energetic.

“The Second Prince!” Little White and Little Blue exclaimed, also immediately recognizing him. This was the most famous prince, after all, so there were few people in the Fiend races who didn’t recognize him.

The Second Prince’s eyes couldn't help but light up. Why were the Snake race’s women all so lovely? Even so, the Medusa Queen in the middle was still the most beautiful. Her looks were as devastating as expected.

Yu Yanluo’s expression became a bit cold as she said, “We all came to rescue you and so many people have died, and yet you're still standing here fine and well.”

“Many people died?” the Second Prince repeated as he put away his smile. “How many of my people have died over these years, all to fend off the monsters?”

“That kind of ceaseless struggle already left them all in despair. We all knew things became like this because of the battle at the Fiend King Court. I failed in my struggle for the throne, and those important figures in the court couldn't publicly kill me because of the strength of my army, so they could only use a method like that to wear me down.” He paused for a moment. His expression grew cold before he continued, “In other words, until the final drop of blood flowed out of our bodies, we would never be able to break free of that fate.”

As they listened to his words, the soldiers under his command revealed looks of extreme anger. It was clear that they couldn't endure such a hopeless fate.

“All of you were guilty, and yet the Fiend King Court took the bigger picture into consideration and didn't kill you, instead giving you a chance to atone for your crimes. Not only did they not receive your gratitude in return, what they received was your resentment and betrayal,” Yu Yanluo berated them in response. “Furthermore, the Fiend King Court didn't completely abandon your well-being. Not only did they provide you with the best logistical support, they frequently replenished your supplies. How is that making you bleed down to the last drop?!”

“Everyone has their own opinion. Debating this here is meaningless,” the Second Prince said, changing the subject by asking, “Medusa Queen, do you want to fight, or do you wish to surrender?”

Little White and Little Blue stared nervously at the surrounding army. They quietly said to Yu Yanluo, “Clan leader, we have some secret techniques that can cover you and allow you to escape. You can't turn around, and you must keep running!” They had already promised big brother Zu earlier, and protecting their clan leader was the mission of every Snake race member to begin with. A resolute look appeared in the two young women's eyes.

Yu Yanluo shook her head and said, “We've already sacrificed too many people. I can't let you two do meaningless things. We surrender.”

She knew that these young women were planning to use their lives to protect her. How could she agree to that? More importantly, she knew that before the Second Prince's army, unless she was at her strongest and had a bit of hope, there was no way to escape no matter what kind of price she paid.

When he heard what she said, the Second Prince smiled and said, "As expected of the Medusa Queen. Pass down the order and welcome them into the army. In the following days, no one is permitted to treat them with disrespect."

...

A while later, Little White quietly told Yu Yanluo, "Clan leader, they didn't even send anyone to restrain us, nor did they put any restrictions on us. As long as we don't leave the area they permit us, they even let us do what we want."

"That's right, that's right! They didn't even separate us. I was so worried at first!" Little Blue hurriedly added, nodding.

"The Second Prince is an extremely proud person, and I am the queen of a clan. Since we've already surrendered and given him face, he will naturally show us the appropriate etiquette in return," Yu Yanluo replied.

"Then isn't he still pretty good?" Little White and Little Blue replied gratefully.

"Good, huh..." Yu Yanluo trailed off, remaining expressionless. Who knew just how many people had been led to their deaths due to the Second Prince's actions?

As she looked in the direction the army was moving in, Yu Yanluo was a bit confused. They seemed to be moving in the direction of the exit to the sealed land. Was the Second Prince planning to bring his people out? Did he not fear Primeval Iron City's Peacock Wise King?

...

Meanwhile, Zu An moved through the wind and snow. He suddenly sensed something and turned around, but everything was covered in a dusky and overcast color. He couldn't see any scenery at all. He didn't know if he was getting overly nervous from worry, but he just felt anxious about whether or not Yu Yanluo's party would return safely.

"They should be fine, right..." he muttered. With how things were, there was no way he could go back and look for them. After all, the Second Empress' situation was more dire. Their defenses could fall apart completely at any time, and if that happened, their army could be completely wiped out.

...

With that, he adjusted his direction along the way. At first, he was worried that he wouldn't be able to find Mengte City within the vast sealed land. After all, there was no satellite navigation, and things like maps were only a rough approximation.

However, he quickly realized that he was overthinking things. There was a foul stench unique to monsters that filled the air. It was so strong that it was a bit hard to breathe.

"What a strong smell..." Zu An muttered as he flew in the direction of that smell. His expression gradually changed.

Monsters covered everything as far as the eye could see. Judging from their density, there were over a million. They stacked on top of each other layer after layer, completely surrounding a lone city. The city was like a skiff in the ocean that was constantly being rocked back and forth, as if it could be overturned at any time. Before a million monsters, an individual's strength was just that insignificant.

Goosebumps covered Zu An's entire body. The scene before him was just like endless barnacles covering a rocky shore, so many that it was enough to create a newfound phobia.

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Chapter 2040: Despair

The most common kind of monster outside Mengte City was something akin to a zombie. However, they weren't zombified humans, but rather creatures from who knew what world. Bones were visible from the holes in their body, but they were nothing like the clean skeletons Zu An had seen before in secret dungeons. These things still had most of their flesh, but signs of rotting were visible. It was as if they had lost their skin, and their bodies were dripping wet. Forget about fighting against these creatures, if one came into contact with the rotting liquid, one could get infected with something.

Countless zombies piled up on each other, crawling up the city walls like ants. Even though they weren't fast, there were just too many of them. They were about to reach the top of the city.

However, the army on top of the city walls seemed to have already prepared for them. Giant boulders came rolling down, causing the zombie towers that had been formed with extreme difficulty to come toppling down. At the same time, the city wall began to distort, and sharp points thrust out through the walls, skewering the zombies like chickens. Then, the sharp weapons withdrew, and the zombies fell. Such skills seemed to be the work of an earth element cultivator.

Immediately after, a group of water element cultivators launched their attack at the top of the city wall. A layer of watery mist that instantly froze under the frigid weather appeared on the surface of the wall, making its surface shiny and slippery. The clumsy zombies could no longer crawl up. The ones that weren't able to withdraw in time were frozen directly to the wall. Their corpses and the ice became the best possible armor for the city wall to protect against other monsters' long-range attacks.

Suddenly, countless dark figures rushed past, far more quickly than the previous zombies. These were none other than the crawlers Zu An had previously fought against. They had incredibly sharp claws, so the sleek ice was like ordinary flat ground for them. Furthermore, their movements were extremely agile. Even while climbing, they could twist their bodies around to avoid the incoming arrows.

Soon, dozens of crawlers climbed over the city wall. However, the Fiend races' army was already fully prepared, and their spears stabbed forward. Even though the crawlers were extremely strong individually, they were quickly killed on the spot before a proper army.

Even so, the number of monsters was too great. No matter how many died in front, they still charged as if they didn't care about their lives at all. The Fiend races' front lines were battered again and again, gradually becoming weaker than they were at first.

There were many monsters in the air as well. Flying creatures of all different shapes and sizes were trying to cross the city walls and slaughter their way into the city.

The fiend soldiers fired ballistas into the air and used long-ranged magic. Many experts flew up to face the enemies. The Fiend races weren't like humans, who needed to reach the master rank to fly about freely. Due to their innate talents and species origins, many were capable of natural flight, such as the Eagle, Peacock, Elf, and Golden Crow Imperial races! Now that it was a matter of life and death, there was no room for differences between species anymore. All of them fought together shoulder to shoulder against an external enemy.

And yet, there were just too many monsters, and many of them could fly as well. The most troublesome among them were the thin-skinned monsters. They looked as if they only had a layer of skin covering their bones left, but if they had a chance to latch onto a target, they could instantly suck out all of that target's blood essence. All those present had already witnessed that tragic fate too many times. If that happened, there wasn't even a chance to end one's own life. But with how the situation was, they all knew there was no way out. If they could kill one, that was still breaking even. If they could get a few more before going down, that would already be a steal.

The Fiend races' army tried to retaliate, using all kinds of skills to fight the monster army. Each time, they were able to take out a huge amount of monsters, but there were just too many of them. Whenever one monster died, several more took their place. On top of that, the monsters quickly developed strategies to counter their plans. Some bug-shaped monsters raised the armor covering their bodies to shield their companions from long-range attacks.

The situation on the battlefield, both in the sky and on the city wall, was deeply worrying.

Suddenly, there was a disturbance among the monster ranks. Then, a huge vacant space opened up in the midst of a densely packed monster army. After that, a several-hundred-meter long worm slowly moved forward. It looked white and chubby, like a caterpillar that could easily be crushed to death by hand; but even such a normally weak-looking creature gave off an indescribable pressure when it was as big as a dragon. On top of that, the giant caterpillar had over a thousand legs. Every single leg had a suffering, warped human face on the end, creating a truly horrifying sight.

The massive caterpillar's upper body suddenly rose up and squirmed vigilantly. Its stomach swelled up, as if something was moving through it.

The higher level fiends in Mengte City clearly noticed the strange occurrence. They all shouted for their troops to attack it, and that they definitely couldn't allow it to do whatever it was trying to do. Subsequently, countless rune cannons and cultivator techniques fired outward at the giant caterpillar. In response, many armor-plated bugs flew out from the monsters' ranks, spreading their wings to form a massive shield.

However, the Fiend races' most elite troops were not to be trifled with. Half of the armored bugs were blown apart from the initial impact alone, and the remaining attacks continued toward the giant caterpillar. And yet, the surface of the caterpillar's body only rippled, as if it was relying on its body fat to block all the attacks. Even so, some green fluid came out of its body, showing that it was injured.

It seemed to be enraged, opening its massive mouth toward Mengte City; at the same time, the thing swelling up in its body just about reached its throat. It fired a torrent of green liquid in the city wall's direction like a high-pressure water cannon. Meanwhile, its body also quickly shrank in size, as if it had already released all of its essence.

The Fiend races army's formation masters quickly operated their formation discs. Soon after, a huge barrier appeared around Mengte City. Even though they didn't know what that green liquid did, none of them wanted to give it a try and experience what would happen.

The green jet of liquid collided with the barrier around Mengte City almost instantly. The barrier flickered a few times, then completely shattered. Endless green liquid rained down; the formation masters below couldn't avoid it in time and were completely drenched. Miserable screams echoed through the air. The formation masters dissolved so quickly that not even bones were left behind!

The green liquid continued to fall to the ground. The extremely sturdy city wall actually began emanating strands of green smoke. Soon after, that entire side of the wall quickly melted and collapsed. The Fiend races stared at the scene before them in a stupor. They knew there was nothing they could have done to stop it from happening.

Cheers resounded from within the monster army, and they began to rush at the collapsed city wall.



The eyes of all the fiend soldiers became completely red. They knew that if the enemy invaded the city, even their elites would be wiped out, and not even bones would remain. As such, they all bravely rushed out to block the opening without any thought for their own lives. It was as if the entire area had turned into a meat grinder, with each clash resulting in countless lives lost.

The Second Empress took her Golden Crow Guards with her and rushed over. She no longer had her usual flirtatious and seductive appearance; instead, she was dressed completely in silver armor. When she saw the scene, she didn't have time to give any orders, so she just charged with her army, slaughtering countless monsters along the way.

If not for the fact that she was wearing the empire's most precious armor and had the Golden Crow Guards risking life and limb to protect her, she would have already died countless times. Even so, her armor was soon completely covered in cracks. It was as if the next attack would shatter it completely.

A female officer at her side, named Xiao Yi, quickly grabbed her and cried, "Your highness, hurry and retreat! We'll protect you! We can't hold this city any longer..."

"Shut your mouth!" the Second Empress retorted, glaring at her. "You will damage the army's morale if you speak further, and be executed on the spot!"

Xiao Yi gritted her teeth and said, "Your highness, even if you kill me, I must say this! As long as you are alive, there is still hope for our Fiend races. If you die here..."

"If I die here, then so be it!" The Second Empress immediately cut her off with an ice-cold expression.

There was no way she wouldn't know about the current situation. At this point, the collapse of the city was already inevitable. However, she had already used all of the strategies and schemes she could think of; and yet in the end, despair seemed inevitable.

Could she really abandon everyone else and run away? But where would she run?

Wouldn't she have to sacrifice the lives of so many soldiers just so she could live a bit longer? That wasn't something she could bring herself to do!

As the mother of an empire, she wanted to die an honorable death with her soldiers. As long as she continued to fight on the front lines, the soldiers' morale could just barely be maintained, even if what followed was most likely to become a one-sided slaughter.

Even if she was going to die, she had to make the monsters pay a bitter price!

The Second Empress' eyes were completely red. She only had one regret, which was that the regent wasn't here. Otherwise, they wouldn't have fallen into such a state... Still, she knew fully well that the regent was currently on the human side. Perhaps he didn't even know about what was happening here.

While she was feeling despair, Xiao Yi screamed in surprise, "What... What is that?"

The Second Empress had just sliced off the head of a crawler. When she heard Xiao Yi say that, she looked into the distance and saw an expanse of black metal birds. They seemed to be throwing something into the monsters' ranks. Then, terrifying explosions appeared one after another, causing fear and terror among the monsters.

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## **Read Keyboard Immortal - Chapter 2041: Like Shooting Stars**

### Chapter 2041: Like Shooting Stars

"There seems to be someone attacking the monsters from behind, but I've never seen these metal birds before! Could it be that there's internal strife among the monsters?" Xiao Yi wondered.

As she watched the metal birds fire blazing lights that could instantly blast large batches of monsters in a display of absolute carnage, she swallowed with difficulty. This scene was just too inconceivable! Even the most elite Golden Crow Guards firing all their arrows couldn't achieve such terrifying mass destruction! For some reason, the metal birds made her feel fear from the depths of her very soul.

The Second Empress was really confused, but she quickly thought of something and immediately cried excitedly, "It's the regent! The regent has come to save us!"

She suddenly remembered that Zu An had a similar ability. After thinking about it, he was the only person in this entire world with this kind of ability.

*Only he would come here to save me.*

The fiend soldiers immediately cheered. They had been bordering on the brink of despair and thought they were dead for sure. They had never expected there to actually be reinforcements! Furthermore, the regent was famous for his strength. It was rumored that after the late Fiend Emperor perished, he had the greatest cultivation out of anyone alive. Thus, the collapsing front line immediately found their support. As they slaughtered the monsters that were invading through the city wall, it was as if they had chicken blood injected into them[1].

As they charged in retaliation, the monsters didn't care even if their jaws were being sliced right off. Many thin-skinned monsters slipped through the gaps to get onto the soldiers at the forefront. Whenever they were able to cling to a target, they instantly sucked out that person's blood essence.

Suddenly, a resplendent wave of sword ki descended from the sky. The thin-skinned monsters screamed miserably, and they all turned to ashes. Then, Zu An appeared in front of the city. When they saw that it was him, the soldiers let out an even more astonishing cheer of joy.

The Second Empress was a mature woman, and because of her status, she was more restrained in her emotions. However, when she saw that figure, her eyes couldn't help but become a bit moist as well.

*Is he the man destined for me in this life?*

"I've arrived late," Zu An said. When he looked at the bitter scene and the soldiers who had fallen all around, his mood was extremely grave.

The Second Empress was about to reply when new developments suddenly took place on the battlefield. A shocking roar tore through the monsters' camp. Then, the entire city seemed to shake, as if struck by an earthquake.

Nine black-haired giants that towered into the clouds walked over from the distance. With each step, their mountainous feet crushed large amounts of monsters into meat pancakes. It turned out the earthquakes were from their footsteps!

Mengte City's soldiers were all terrified. These giants were just too large, to the point that their upper bodies reached beyond the clouds and their faces couldn't even be seen.

The giants raised their massive hands and waved them all around as if they were swatting mosquitoes. One after another, the fighter aircrafts exploded from their strikes.

Zu An's expression was grave. He tried to make the fighters evade, and he also made them fire countless air-to-air missiles. The missiles easily hit the giants, creating intense explosions on their skin, but the giants were just way too big. Even if there were some wounds, they were just like mosquito bites, unable to create any substantial damage. As for the machine gun fire, it couldn't even break the giants' skin. Soon after, the previously majestic bombers and fighters became a mess. The remaining ones were also smashed out of the sky by the monsters, who had snapped out of their fear.

Zu An sighed. He had already known that science and technology from his previous world wouldn't necessarily be unmatched in this world. Perhaps they would be useful against lower cultivation creatures, but the high-technology weapons that reaped lives like mowing grass in his world couldn't do much against those with a certain degree of cultivation in this world. Besides that, there were a million monsters, with no lack of strong individuals among them. It was delusional to expect the Rune Weapon Chart's modern weapons to completely defeat them.

When all of the surrounding aircraft were defeated, the nine giants beat their chests and roared proudly.

In the ears of Mengte City's people, the roars were like thunder. Almost all of the soldiers' faces turned deathly pale. Even the regent's powerful methods had been ruined by these monsters. The giants were too terrifying! Even though they were still far away, the soldiers could feel a terrifying pressure. If these giants had joined the fight from the very beginning, just a few steps would have already crushed the city into pieces, right?

When she sensed the drop in morale, the Second Empress was incredibly anxious, but she didn't know how to get out of the situation. She could only reflexively look at the man next to her. Even so, she knew she was hoping for way too much. He was only a man, not a god.

However, when she saw what he was doing, her entire body trembled. She exclaimed, "Sun Slaying Bow! It's the Sun Slaying Bow!"

Zu An stood at the very front of the city. He took a step forward, then leaned backward, drawing the red bow in his hands in an arc like a crescent moon. His entire body emanated an air of extreme power.

Immediately after, he released an arrow. It was like a shooting star, smashing through the chest of a black-haired giant almost instantly.

*Boom!*

The giant's chest, which had endured even against the missiles, exploded into a rain of blood. A huge hole that went all the way through it appeared. The giant wailed in shock, and its entire body came crumbling down. The monsters below who couldn't dodge in time were crushed into bloody pancakes. The giant twitched a few times, then fell silent.

Everyone in the city now saw the giant's face. It was like an ape, but it had the mouth of a deep sea creature, filled with terrifying fangs; that made it far uglier and more disgusting than an ape.

"The regent is mighty!"

"Long live the regent!"

...

When they saw the scene, every single person in Mengte City who was fighting against the monsters screamed with joy. The terrifying giant had been shot down by a single arrow!

When they heard the disgraceful cheers, the Second Empress and those from the Golden Crow Imperial Clan didn't feel that it was unsuitable at all. On the contrary, they were so moved they really wanted to cheer along as well.

Zu An didn't have the time to respond. He drew another arrow, and streaks of light tore through the sky. The black-haired giants saw that the situation was unfavorable and wanted to run. They could cover ten thousand meters with a single step and weren't slow, but how could they be faster than shooting stars? One after another, they were struck by the arrows, opening up huge holes in their chests.

There were even some giants that bravely tried to block the terrifying shooting stars with their arms, but how powerful was the Sun Slaying Bow? The shooting stars blasted straight through their palms, blowing open holes in their bodies all the same.

The nine terrifying giants fell, and the morale of Mengte City rose to its limit. As they slaughtered the monsters, they were full of energy, their fighting strength rising to a hundred and fifty percent of their usual power! Soon after, the monsters were completely forced away from the city wall.

The Second Empress arrived at Zu An's side excitedly, her eyes full of adoration.

*This man really is strong, as expected of the one I chose.*

She was about to say something when Zu An leaned against her, saying, "Don't make a big deal out of this. I need a moment to catch my breath."

The Second Empress could clearly sense that his hands were shaking a bit and immediately reacted. The Sun Slaying Bow was such a powerful divine weapon, so how could it be fired so easily, let alone nine times in succession? Even the Golden Crow Guards' Elder Qi, who had the highest cultivation, would only perish and have his body explode after attempting such a thing. Only someone with a body as tough as Zu An's could achieve this result, where he was only a bit weary.

When they saw the two holding each other, the Fiend races soldiers were a bit stunned, but they all revealed knowing smiles. Some people from the Fiend King Court had paid attention to their relationship. Now, the rumors were proven true.

However, no one felt as if there was something wrong with it. The Fiend races were different from the humans, after all. Things like widows remarrying, or taking one's sister-in-law after one's brother died, were an ordinary affair. After fighting bitterly year-round, the ability to bear children became a highly valued

resource, so they were much more open-minded in that sense. Furthermore, they worshiped the strong. Apart from the regent, who else was worthy of the Second Empress among the Fiend races?

The Second Empress' face became completely red from embarrassment. Even though she wasn't scared of her affair being known, hugging Zu An in front of all of these soldiers made her heart pound quickly.

Zu An looked at the black expanse of monsters in front of him with a grave expression. After their initial alarm, the monsters seemed to have recovered. They began to gather toward the wall again.

"Could it be that someone is commanding them?" Zu An wondered as he stared at the seemingly infinite monsters.

1. Chicken blood therapy was a form of pseudo-medical therapy. People carried young roosters to the hospital, where several milliliters of chicken blood would be drawn and then injected into their body. Doing this once a week was believed to make someone aggressive and as powerful as an ox. ?

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Chapter 2042: That Night, Everyone Met Their Maker

Zu An stared into the endless monster army. However, the monsters didn't have officer banners like the humans, so it was hard to recognize who exactly was commanding them.

The Second Empress keenly sensed his frown and asked out of consideration, "Ah Zu, what's wrong?"

Zu An shared his realization with her. He figured that since she had fought these monsters for a long time, perhaps she would know more.

The Second Empress shook her head and said, "It is honestly really strange. Most of the monsters have low intelligence and should be creatures that instinctively prey on food, and yet they are attacking with such strategy. They are even more fearless than human soldiers, so I do not know what to do either."

When he heard her description, Zu An said seriously, "There's definitely something commanding them, or else there would've been mutual slaughter among their army a long time ago. How could they possibly attack the city in such a concerted manner?"

"But we cannot tell who is commanding them at all," the Second Empress said as she looked at the black expanse of monsters. Normally, if one wanted to command an army of such a huge scale, then apart from language, they had to understand flag signals, or drum beats. But these monsters didn't have any of that. She didn't even see any soldiers meant for passing along orders.

The monster army once again swarmed toward Mengte City like an ocean wave. But this time, because of the incredible prowess Zu An displayed, the city's soldiers were full of morale and continued to stop their assault. The city wall that had previously been broken down by the caterpillar became the focal point of the monsters' attacks. But with Zu An's assistance, the monsters weren't able to break through. At the same time, many earth, ice, and water element cultivators worked together to rebuild it, forming a new city wall.

When she saw that a new city wall was going up, the Second Empress sighed in relief.

Zu An's expression was grave, however. The fearless monsters continued charging forward again and again even though the fiends' side was always able to fend them off, forcing them to leave behind a pile of corpses. It didn't look as if the monsters were decreasing in number at all. There were just way too many of them. Meanwhile, under the monster attacks, Mengte City's soldiers were suffering casualties again and again. If this continued for two or three more rounds, their entire battle line could collapse.

In the past, when the Fiend races fought against the human army, it was none other than their numbers advantage that had put the humans in a difficult spot. Who could have thought that fortunes would rise and fall so quickly, for these foreign monsters' numbers to far exceed their own?

The Tiger race's leader, Hu Qianxiao, arrived at their side. He quietly said, "Second Empress, regent, we can't hold on for much longer. Should we use this chance while everyone still has some strength left to break out of this encirclement?"

The Second Empress' expression changed. If it were someone else who made this suggestion, perhaps she would have already executed them under



military law. But Hu Qianxiao was different. His Tiger race warriors had brought heroic contributions the whole time.

“Of course I know that we can’t hold on for much longer, but there are monsters everywhere outside of the city. How can we break out?” she replied bitterly.

“Even so, the only thing awaiting us here is death. If we try to break out, we will still have a chance of survival. The most important thing is hope...” Hu Qianxiao said nervously. He naturally knew that the Second Empress was worried that the morale would drop if they chose to abandon the city. At that point, they wouldn’t be able to mount an effective retaliation at all. “This humble one is willing to be at the very vanguard of the attack. I vow to slaughter a bloody path of survival for everyone.”

He was also going for broke. Being at the very front meant there would definitely be terrible casualties. However, what he was more scared of was defending this spot to the death. If that happened, the entire army would be completely wiped out.

The Second Empress was hesitant. She could only look toward Zu An.

Zu An patted her hand to console her, saying, “Let’s not be in a rush to leave yet. It’ll be fine as long as we can figure out a way to defeat these monsters head-on.”

Hu Qianxiao laughed helplessly, saying, “These monsters’ forces are dozens of times larger than our own, and they are all individually strong. We have already tried all kinds of methods. If we could defeat them with a frontal assault, we wouldn’t have fled all the way here.”

There was no lack of famous generals among the Fiend races. That was also why, even though they had fallen into this trap, they were still able to hold on until now. They had already developed brilliant strategies outside the norm and used all kinds of schemes. But even so, they knew that there was no way of defeating these monsters, and they could only buy a bit more time.

“Just leave it to me,” Zu An said as he looked at the black mass of monsters. He seemed to have already come up with a plan.

Hu Qianxiao frowned, saying, “Regent, I know that your cultivation is high, but no matter how great an individual’s power is, they still cannot change much

against this many monsters. Not even the late Fiend Emperor reincarnated could do anything in this situation.”

Zu An chuckled, saying, “The late Fiend Emperor is the late Fiend Emperor; I am myself. You can watch from right here, I’ll be back.”

Hu Qianxiao asked, “Do you need help? This one can go with you!” He was already one of those with the greatest fighting prowess out of the survivors.

“There’s no need. It’ll be done soon.” Zu An paused for a moment before saying, “Right, activate all of your defensive formations, the highest level you have.”

The Second Empress was stunned, saying, “But we don’t have enough resources left to begin with. If we activate all of our defenses to the maximum, that will use up all of the energy we have. We won’t be able to use them again!”

“Trust me,” Zu An said simply, then flew in the direction of the monster army.

When she saw him leave, the Second Empress was full of worry. The metal birds he had taken out were already extremely shocking, but defeating a monster army of a million was still beyond their power. Even if he took them out again, even without the giants, they still had ways of defeating them. Since then, she had already thought of many ways the monsters could deal with the metal birds. Even though Zu An’s cultivation was high, one man against a million monsters was like throwing a pebble into the ocean.

All of the soldiers in the city cheered when they saw Zu An charge out. Even though they didn’t know what kind of solution Zu An had, they had seen the regent’s power themselves. It was precisely because they didn’t have enough information that they had even greater hopes.

When she saw that, the Second Empress gritted her teeth. She ordered the troops to activate the highest-level defensive formation. At the same time, she flew over to the war drums. She pushed the drummers away and personally hit the drums to give Zu An support.

When he heard the pounding war drums behind him, Zu An turned around. Seeing the Second Empress behind him strike the drums with worry and resolution, he felt warm inside.

Suddenly, many of the flying monsters sensed his arrival. They rushed at him to rip him to pieces. However, one after another, golden ripples appeared in the sky behind Zu An. Then, countless metal weapons fired out from inside. All of the incoming monsters were instantly blasted apart.

When they saw that, the soldiers in Mengte City cheered even louder.

However, the truly strong individuals such as Hu Qianxiao and the Second Empress were full of worry. This move Zu An showed was strong, capable of single-handedly dominating an army of ten thousand. But what he was facing off against was a monster army of a million! On top of that, there were still some especially strong monsters on the other side! Perhaps his terrifying sword ki could kill many, many enemies, but more monsters would instantly drown him out and completely rip him apart. Only by increasing the distance and kiting the monsters, doing his best to face fewer enemies at a time and nibbling away at them while trying to stir up alarm in the enemy army, would he be able to earn a slight chance of survival for all of them.

And yet, what left the two of them stupefied was that Zu An didn't fly around the edge of the enemy army, and instead went to the very center.

"Has he gone mad?!" Hu Qianxiao muttered to himself.

The Second Empress was also horrified. Even though Zu An was powerful, compared to the black expanse of monsters, he was just like an ant. Even if ten Fiend Emperors rushed at the monsters, they would still be drowned under the weight of numbers. How could he possibly be ten times stronger than the late Fiend Emperor?

When the monsters saw Zu An fly to the very center, many of them snickered. The ones at the very front were almost all cannon fodder, while this was where the stronger ones were. There was no lack of creatures on the level of the Heart-Devouring Demon Spiders and Demonic Motherbug there. Sinister looks appeared on their faces. They would soon teach this fella what it meant to try and fight numbers with his two measly fists!

*We can drown you to death with just our spittle!*

The golden sword ki was really terrifying, but there was a limit to its power. With so many of them to take on a share of the burden, blocking the attacks wasn't difficult at all. Then, there would definitely be a chance to get closer and chew him to death.

*The blood essence of someone this strong will definitely taste amazing!*

When he saw those powerful monsters charge at him with sinister smiles, Zu An muttered to himself, “I’ve watched an animation where the main character had the nickname Nuclear Sword Immortal. It just so happens that I seem to be able to put together hydrogen bombs...”

While he spoke, a large, droplet-shaped iron ball suddenly appeared behind him.

“What is that?” Many of the great monsters were stunned. The metal ball looked to be a few meters long. It wasn’t even as large as many of their companions.

“You want to crush us to death with such a small metal ball?” they exclaimed, laughing.

“Be careful! Those metal spheres earlier were able to create explosions of great heat and force,” a more cautious monster warned.

“Heh, the things those metal birds dropped aren’t even enough to scratch an itch for us. A single punch will make him meet his maker!” a great monster that resembled a praying mantis replied, then sent a punch as fast as lightning at that iron sphere. It was so fast that the friction between its claw and the air produced a sunset-like radiance.

The other monsters nodded. The mantis’ claw was generally acknowledged to be the strongest among all of them. Its punch could crush any defenses, and it should have been more than enough to make the enemy meet their maker.

But what they didn’t expect was that the power of this punch was far greater than any of them had expected. It made all of them meet their maker!

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Chapter 2043: Dazzling Fireworks

The hydrogen bomb actually needed an atomic bomb to ignite it, but Zu An hadn’t expected this monster’s punch to be so strong as to actually create a

sufficiently high-temperature, high-pressure environment. It saved him that step and immediately ignited the hydrogen bomb.

*Boom!*

A blinding white light erupted from the center of the monster army. Many people within Mengte City had been watching what was happening, and those with lower cultivations immediately clutched their eyes in pain. Immediately after, a massive mushroom cloud soared. The fiery light that erupted in that instant even outshone the sun itself.

The monsters that had been mocking Zu An for using a small metal ball against them all had drastically different expressions. Even such powerful beings sensed extreme danger. They all used their ultimate skills to run away as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, the power of the hydrogen bomb's central blast zone was just too great. They could only scream as their bodies turned to ashes. Meanwhile, the mantis who was known for its strong punch died the most peacefully, because it was instantly vaporized.

An enormous ball of fire surrounded everything within a few kilometers. Almost all of the monsters in the area were burned to ashes. Immediately after, a terrifying shockwave rippled out in all directions. The monsters on the outside instantly caught on fire and were blown into the sky by the shockwave.

The shockwave quickly reached the distant Mengte City. The highest-level defensive formation was shining brightly, but it was quickly covered in countless cracks. A second later, the barrier shattered. An earthquake tore through the entire city, and many houses inside collapsed. Even the wall they had rebuilt collapsed once more.

Fortunately, because of the resistance of the defensive formation, most of Mengte City remained intact. Many people were injured, but didn't lose their lives. However, they reflexively hid behind cover as they stared at the terrifying mushroom cloud in the distance, which had reached its full size. It reached into the clouds, and the top couldn't be seen anymore. Meanwhile, the bottom half was dozens of kilometers wide! What kind of power was this?

The Second Empress looked at the very center of the explosion with a look of horror. If its power was this great, didn't that mean everything boded ill for Ah Zu?

As if seeing through her worries, Xiao Yi advised her, “Your highness, there is no need to worry. The regent has always acted with confidence in his plans. He will definitely return safely.”

The Second Empress nodded slightly and could only comfort herself with similar words. But could he really be fine after experiencing such a terrifying explosion?

She gritted her teeth, then gathered her thoughts again, commanding her subordinates to rebuild the collapsed wall. The terrifyingly hot winds around them made everything difficult, melting a lot of the ice on the city walls that had seemed as if it would never melt.

Fortunately, the monster army was now in complete disorder and scurrying in all directions. They were definitely in no mood to attack the city further.

...

Meanwhile, a thousand miles out, the Second Prince was leading his troops toward the exit when many mounts stirred restlessly. His troops all sensed something and turned around. They saw a huge ball of fire in the horizon, clearly visible even from all the way where they were. They were all shocked. What was that thing, and how could it be this frightening?

There were some subordinates who asked the Second Prince if they needed to send some people to investigate it. The Second Prince’s expression changed several times, but in the end, he waved his hand and said, “We will carry out a rapid advance and leave the sealed land as quickly as possible.”

Yu Yanluo’s beautiful brows furrowed slightly, but when she secretly observed the Second Prince’s reaction, she felt a bit more at ease.

If this was something even he didn’t know about, it was probably not the monsters’ attack and likely something Ah Zu had come up with.

*Ah Zu, you have to stay safe!*

...

Meanwhile, Zu An was observing the monsters’ situation several kilometers away from Mengte City. He had used his exchange and instant movement abilities to just barely avoid the main blast of the bomb. Light was flickering all

around his body, and the outline of the Tranquility Bell faintly manifested around him. It was clear that with his current cultivation, the blast waves couldn't injure him.

When he saw the situation in the distance, he couldn't help but frown, muttering, "The power of one hydrogen bomb is lower than I imagined..."

Even though the powerful monsters at the dead center of the explosion had melted away on the spot and all of the monsters within a mile died, there were just too many monsters. Even though the monsters on the outer edges had all more or less suffered some injuries, there was no danger to their lives. This was, after all, a monster army with their own defensive formations. Together with their ridiculous strength, the bomb couldn't have killed more than a fifth of the army at most.

Zu An thought back to the destruction caused by tsunamis and earthquakes, and how that was equivalent to many thousands of nuclear weapons. The reason why humans feared nuclear weapons was still just because they were inherently too weak. These monsters were tough and strong, so they had a certain degree of resistance.

As he watched the remaining monsters flee in all directions, Zu An knew that after some time, they would gather together and become a terrifying force again. Even if he used the hydrogen bomb again, they wouldn't be completely unprepared like before. Even after thought of that, however, he gritted his teeth and made another hydrogen bomb, tossing it where the monsters were the most concentrated.

When they saw it, the monsters all screamed, pointing at the hydrogen bomb while saying something. After learning their lesson from the mantis earlier, no one dared to attack it. Instead, some monsters used their own abilities to divert the hydrogen bomb toward Mengte City. When he saw that, Zu An broke out into a cold shiver and took control over the hydrogen bomb again.

In that time, the monsters had already fled in different directions. When he saw how they scattered, Zu An knew the effects of this bomb would definitely be far less than the first one. The amount of energy he needed to consume to create a hydrogen bomb was quite large. If he could only kill a few monsters with one, that was definitely unacceptable. Was there a way to gather them together again?

Zu An smiled helplessly. Even though these monsters didn't have much intelligence, they weren't stupid either. With their earlier lesson, how could they possibly decide to gather up together just to get hit again?

*Hold up...*

He suddenly thought of something and hollered at the running monsters, "Didn't you all want to invade our world? Why do you only know how to run? Are you monsters all cowards? If you have the skill, why don't you come and fight us properly?!" With his current cultivation, his voice was already able to fill the entire battlefield.

When she saw that he was safe and sound, the Second Empress couldn't help but sigh in relief. But soon after, she was confused, because she naturally knew that Zu An wanted the monsters to gather up. Even so, those monsters weren't stupid, so why would they throw their lives away just because of some words of provocation from him?

She wasn't the only one who had such thoughts. Many people were confused.

*The regent is normally brilliant and heroic, so why does he now seem a bit... naive?*

But soon after, their eyes almost popped out of their sockets, because they saw the monsters, whom they had thought absolutely wouldn't turn back, turn around one after another and rush at Zu An. They were all stupefied.

*Did these monsters go mad?*

All of the monsters felt as if they were going mad. They were clearly supposed to escape from the metal ball, and yet they were being insulted by a human? That was absolutely preposterous!

*Humans are only worthy of being our food. When has food ever acted so arrogantly?*

Besides, they were fearless monsters to begin with. For the sake of the monsters' glory, they had to kill that human!

When he saw the monsters scream as they ran at him, Zu An chuckled. It seemed 'Fragrant Barf' was useful against these monsters too. Once the skill



was activated, the targets would pursue the user relentlessly. Either he died, or they died.

When he saw the black mass of monsters charge at him, Zu An exchanged positions again with the monster farthest out. Immediately after, he teleported several times to move more than ten kilometers away. The monster that was swapped in was completely stunned. It looked at the incoming monsters, seeing that there was no lack of powerful creatures that it normally wouldn't dare to face, and was immediately scared witless.

But it wasn't just that monster alone that was scared witless. The charging monsters saw that the hateful human had vanished, and the terrifying metal ball was already right in the middle of all of them.

*Boom!*

Once again, dazzling fireworks blossomed outside Mengte City.

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Chapter 2044: Don't Leave, My Friends

"What the hell is this? It's too scary!"

"Everyone, hurry and run! I saw a lot of great monsters that were instantly vaporized!"

"What was wrong with those guys? Did they turn stupid? They actually flocked over to that thing?"

...

The remaining monsters were now completely mortified. They fled in all directions like pigs.

Even the soldiers in Mengte City were left dizzy from the powerful impact. The Second Empress quickly moved the troops around so those with lower cultivations could hide in the back and get some rest, while those with higher cultivations held the front line. Even though the monsters were already fleeing in all directions, they still had to make the necessary preparations just in case.

As she looked at the dazzling mushroom cloud in the sky, her expression was full of excitement.

*Just how did he do all of this?*

*This really is a man who continues to create miracles again and again...*

During the past few days, she hadn't been able to catch her breath at all, going from one life and death situation to another. Eventually, the whole army had already been left on the brink of collapse, unable to see any hope. They were facing a million monsters, after all... Numbers and strength that terrifying were already enough to crush any crafty plot.

And yet, after Zu An appeared and delivered two massive firework explosions, the Second Empress suddenly felt that victory was no longer impossible.

Hu Qianxiao also ran over to her side excitedly and asked, "Your highness, should I lead my army out and teach those motherf\*ckers a proper lesson?"

The monsters were already completely frightened. This was a good chance to beat them down further.

The Second Empress shook her head slightly and said, "The explosion is still quite vicious. If we go out now, our casualties will also be extremely severe. Let's wait for the regent first."

She believed that once it was time, Zu An would definitely give the signal. Still, when she saw those scurrying monsters, she couldn't help but become a bit worried. If they still didn't act soon, the monsters could really completely escape.

Just then, Zu An flew up into the air again. A wanton laugh echoed through the world. "Everyone says you monsters are brave, but I don't see any difference between you and pigs!" He activated Fragrant Barf again.

Many fleeing monsters immediately stopped, but many of them were still a bit hesitant. The metal ball that could create a huge explosion was just too terrifying. Among them, however, a great monster shouted out in monster language, "There's no way he can use that powerful weapon endlessly! Look at how weak his body is; he's probably already at his limit and is only posturing!"

Compared to a monster, a human like Zu An was much weaker. When they heard that, many monsters felt it made sense. That brat had already tossed out the terrifying weapons twice. Could he really still have a third one?

For some reason, the monsters all burned with rage whenever they looked at the human. They wanted to chop up his corpse into a thousand pieces. As such, a group of monsters ran back, screaming as they charged at Zu An.

When he saw the rage in the monsters' eyes, Zu An felt a bit of regret. Unfortunately, no Rage points could be earned when they were made angry because of the Fragrant Barf skill. Otherwise, the Rage points of a million monsters would have been exciting to even just think about.

When he saw the monsters surrounding him, Zu An continued to use Fragrant Barf while acting weak. It was as if he was struggling to summon the terrifying weapon again.

When they saw what he was doing, the monsters were a bit shaken. They reflexively slowed their approach. Even though they really wanted to kill him, the power of that weapon was just too frightening. Their survival instincts began to take over.

Sweat appeared on Zu An's forehead. Even after he struggled for a long time, nothing came out.

The monsters cheered when they saw that, exclaiming, "He completely exhausted himself, as expected! Everyone, let's fight shoulder to shoulder!"

When she saw the monsters rush at him like a flood, as if they had gone completely mad, the Second Empress couldn't help but feel worried. She reflexively wanted to rush out and help, but Xiao Yi held her back, saying, "Your highness, you absolutely cannot go! If you go out there, you'll die for sure!" The Second Empress would be instantly swallowed up by the black mass if she went out, after all.

"But he's in danger!" the Second Empress exclaimed in a panic. She quickly flung away Xiao Yi.

"What if it's the regent's scheme? If you went there, your highness would only put the regent in danger because he would have to save you," Xiao Yi quickly reminded her.

“Really?” the Second Empress replied, stunned. She realized that there was indeed that possibility.

...

By now, the monsters had arranged themselves in three layers around Zu An. They had learned from their earlier lesson and were scared that he could get away. Many of them set up spiderwebs and other screens. Anything that tried to go past such barriers would be stopped. The monsters weren't stupid. As long as he remained here, even if he could summon that powerful weapon, he himself would also die and wouldn't dare to use it.

Unfortunately, even though their plans were good, he still suddenly vanished, and in his place was a fat iron ball. It turned out that when Zu An looked like he was struggling, he had already summoned a nuke, but it was more than ten kilometers away. Once all of the monsters surrounded him, he then immediately swapped positions with it, not giving them any chance to escape.

When they saw the fat metal ball, the monsters' eyes almost popped out.

“You piece of...”

*Boom!*

Another terrifying mushroom cloud rose!

When she looked at the blinding ball of fire in the distance, even someone with the Second Empress' cultivation felt pain in her eyes. However, she didn't care at all and instead held Xiao Yi's hand excitedly, exclaiming, “Xiao Yi, I didn't expect you to understand him best!”

Xiao Yi wiped at her cold sweat. She had only said that to stop the Second Empress from throwing her life away. She'd had no idea that the regent was really this strong.

Nearby, Hu Qianxiao couldn't help but swallow with difficulty when he saw the terrifying mushroom cloud. He quickly warned his sons, “You must firmly remember this. In the future, you must stand at the regent's side; you can never make him your enemy.”

The Tiger race's princes nodded frantically. One of them was really glad that his relationship with the regent hadn't been bad during their earlier meeting, establishing some friendship between them.

*In contrast, those Lion race princes really are dumbasses. They actually dared to provoke the regent! That was probably part of the reason why they sided with the monsters this time.*

...

Just then, Zu An had already returned to the air. The dark expanse of monsters was now down to two-fifths of their original number. They were now far from being as impressive as before.

When they saw Zu An return, the remaining monsters roared and ran at him. Even though he couldn't understand what they were saying, judging from their expressions, they were definitely cursing him brutally.

Zu An clenched his teeth and activated Fragrant Barf again. The scattered monsters all stopped. They hesitated as they exchanged looks.

"There's no way, right? Are we still going?"

"That kid already did three rounds. He's definitely at his limit."

"But what if he isn't?"

"Look at how pale his expression is! Even his legs are shaking, and he can't even fly steadily anymore. He's definitely at his limit. Did you realize that when he came back this time, he wasn't as arrogant as before, and he sounds as if he's hoping we'll run away as early as possible?"

"I understand! Is this the so-called double bluff of the humans?"

"Brother, you're amazing! You actually saw through him!"

...

All of the monsters discussed with each other and felt that was highly likely. As such, they rushed at Zu An furiously. This time, they decided to stay a certain distance away and use long-range attacks.

Zu An felt a bit annoyed. It seemed that after being fooled several times, they had become much smarter. Fragrant Barf was effective, but attacking from long-range was still trying to kill him. In order to bait these monsters to come closer, he didn't use the exchange skill, and instead took the attacks head-on.

After around three breaths of time, the Tranquility Bell around him shattered. Even the dozens of defensive formations he quickly set up could only hold on for thirty seconds. Fortunately, he promptly used the Heaven Devouring Sutra to create black holes all around him and neutralize all of the attacks, even taking out the Human Emperor Seal to protect himself. Only then could he barely hold on.

Their numbers were still not to be underestimated. Even though none of these monsters were as strong as him, when several hundred of them attacked together, it was still extremely terrifying. If he didn't have all kinds of divine weapons and skills, perhaps he would have already been blasted into dregs.

As they watched the lights around him shatter one after another and saw him tottering, even the monsters that were watching from a distance couldn't hold themselves back anymore. They thought that if they joined in too, they would definitely become the last straw that broke the camel's back.

*This guy is just too hateful, actually killing hundreds of thousands of our comrades. We can't swallow down this grudge!*

When he saw the remaining monsters start to gather, Zu An knew that it was about time. He suddenly vanished.

When they saw another terrifying metal ball where he had been, all of the monsters went mad. They immediately turned around to run. Unfortunately, they had surrounded Zu An layer after layer, so how could it be that easy to run away?

*Boom!*

A mushroom cloud soared again.

This one's destructiveness was even greater than the very first one. More than half of the remaining monsters were destroyed. Only a hundred or so thousand scattered monsters remained, and they fled in all directions.

Zu An appeared in the sky again, calling out, "Don't leave, my friends! You can definitely win this time!"

However, when they heard his words, the monsters only ran even faster.

*Like hell we'll believe that! This damned human is evil!*

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Chapter 2045: Life and Death Crisis

When he saw the monsters flee without even turning around, Zu An was left feeling quite restless.

*Come on, guys, people should trust each other!*

He could only wave his hand toward the city. The Second Empress immediately reacted and ordered for the army to leave the city in pursuit. After all, this time, the monsters were truly scared out of their minds. It was the best time to pursue and attack the fleeing enemy.

Hu Qianxiao felt that his blade was already extremely thirsty. He quickly summoned his troops to take the lead. The monsters' formation was already a mess, and they couldn't mount any effective defense. What unfolded next was a one-sided slaughter. The overwhelming and invincible army of a million monsters was soon reduced to a mere twenty thousand or so.

As she watched the slaughter, the Second Empress was left in disbelief. She flew over to Zu An's side and looked at him admiringly, exclaiming, "Ah Zu, you are too amazing!"

Zu An waved his hand to form a defensive barrier around her, saying, "Be careful. The leftover radiation is harmful to the body."

"So that stuff is called radiation?" the Second Empress replied, briefly stunned. However, she quickly laughed it off and continued, "Don't worry. We can sense some harmful things trying to invade our bodies, but as long as we use ki, we can block it out."

It was now Zu An's turn to feel surprise. He hadn't expected the cultivators of this world to be able to block out radiation that way. It seemed different worlds really had different answers to the same things.

The Second Empress' eyes were full of affection. If not for the fact that there were countless people watching them right now, perhaps she would have already thrown herself into his arms.

She was publicly acknowledged as the Fiend races' most charming woman; a single look or smile from her could make countless men's hearts melt. It was often said that if she ever slept with a man, her entire body would be as soft as cotton. Unfortunately, no one knew the truth of it, because no one dared to ask the regent that question. However, her alluring figure was public knowledge. She always gave off an enchanting air.

As she watched these two, Xiao Yi couldn't help but cover her face.

*Your highness, even if you're going crazy, you should take a look around you first! There are still so many warriors watching!*

She secretly observed the others' reactions, but she didn't see them act weird at all. Instead, it was as if this was just to be expected, and the most beautiful woman of the Fiend races naturally belonged to the most powerful man.

Instead, the warriors were filled with more excitement. As of late, they had been pressured by the monsters to the point that they couldn't even breathe. Now, they had finally reversed the situation and gotten their revenge, and they had vented out the rage that had built up within them for so long. They chased madly after the monsters, and even those left in the city cheered their companions on with everything they had.

"Ah Zu~" the Second Empress exclaimed, on the brink of tears.

Zu An was about to respond to her when his expression suddenly changed. He turned to the battlefield.

There were several craters on the battlefield that were over a kilometer long and several hundred meters deep. They were all left by the hydrogen bombs. Meanwhile, most of the monsters that had been caught up in the blasts didn't even leave behind a corpse. The few shadows left behind against the walls of the craters were the remains of monsters that were already quite strong. Even



so, there were quite a few charred corpses outside the craters. Even though they were all missing limbs, they were still relatively intact.

Those were all usual sights; the only thing that was unusual was that the remains were still slowly wriggling. If it had been one or two bodies, perhaps it could be explained away as merely being reactions from the muscles and nerves. But all of them were wriggling, creating quite the frightening scene.

“What is going on?” the Second Empress asked, giving Zu An a look. She was feeling a bit scared too.

“Go back to the city first and have your subordinates prepare the defenses. Also, tell the troops who are hunting down monsters to not come back for now,” Zu An said as he gave her waist a push, and a gentle force sent her back to the city.

This scene really was way too strange, creating an ominous feeling. Fortunately, the army chasing the remaining monsters was already some distance away and hadn't stayed behind on the battlefield.

When she returned to the city, the Second Empress' blushing face immediately turned serious. She was someone who could separate her feelings from what was actually important; otherwise, there was no way she could have reached her current status. She continuously issued dozens of orders in succession and arranged everything in the city neatly and tidily. That way, the soldiers wouldn't rush out on a momentary impulse.

Just then, cries of alarm filled the air. The Second Empress reflexively turned around. When she saw what was happening outside, she couldn't help but gasp. She saw countless monsters' remains squirming, before gathering together to form a massive ball of flesh.

There had been over a million monsters originally. Even though a lot of them had been burned to ashes by the hydrogen bombs, the amount of body parts scattered about was not to be underestimated. When so many corpses gather together to form an extremely massive ball of flesh, it was as if an enormous mountain towered above the soldiers.

Zu An's expression was grave. With his current cultivation, he could naturally tell that the monsters had already died, but why had their corpses suddenly 'revived'?

The ball continued to wriggle; many monster corpses squirmed and twisted inside, forming an incredibly disgusting and terrifying sight. It was clear that if the process was allowed to continue, nothing good would happen. With a wave of Zu An's finger, over a hundred streaks of sword ki flew out.

The ball of flesh wasn't too strong in terms of defenses, and there wasn't much resistance when the sword ki landed on its body. The ki immediately exploded, creating over a hundred holes. Countless corpses fell away, scattering all across the ground.

If that many terrifying holes appeared on its body, even a powerful monster on the level of the War Priest could very well have already lost its life on the spot. However, the ball of flesh looked completely fine. It continued to squirm, and just like that, the corpses crawled over again to fill in the holes. Soon, it seemed almost as if it had never been damaged at all.

Zu An was speechless.

Everyone in Mengte City cried out in alarm. "What kind of creature is this?"

The Second Empress frowned. She thought back to the information the Fiend races had on these monsters to see if there was anything about this creature.

Zu An released a cold snort. He slowly raised his right arm to summon the White Lotus Flame. Soon after, a several-hundred-meter long flame blade rushed through the air.

As they looked at the massive flame blade, many people from the Fiend races sighed in amazement. They could feel its destructive power even from far away.

*The regent is so young, but he really is unfathomable. I wonder just how he trained to become so strong. Even if the late Fiend Emperor were here, he would at most be this strong, right?*

By then, the giant flame blade crashed ferociously against the massive ball of flesh. The ball was split open, and wherever the blade went, countless corpses were lit aflame. A cheer resounded from Mengte City.

However, Zu An's expression remained serious. This ball of corpses was just too large. With the remains of a million monsters being merged together, even

a flame blade that was hundreds of meters long seemed completely insignificant in comparison.

Sure enough, the ball of flesh was split in half, but eventually, the flame's power was exhausted even before it could completely cleave the ball in two. Countless monster corpses wriggled, and just like that, the upper half was reformed. Countless corpses almost seemed to have gained their own consciousness as they frantically crawled onto the burning flesh. Soon after, they wrapped around the two burning surfaces, forcibly putting out the White Lotus Flame through the sheer number of bodies.

On the surface of the flesh ball, multiple places caved in, making it look as if two deep eye sockets and a mouth had formed. The 'face' stared at Zu An as he floated in the air. In that instant, Zu An felt goosebumps all over his body, as if he sensed a threat to his life.

A second later, the corpse ball suddenly opened its mouth. Everything around Zu An was immediately covered, and he was swallowed in a single gulp.

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Chapter 2046: Tempting Offer

“Ah!” The Second Empress couldn't help but cry out in alarm when she saw what happened.

It wasn't just her; all of the soldiers in Mengte City turned pale and broke out into a cold sweat. The powerful regent had been devoured just like that?

If such a thing had happened previously, they definitely wouldn't believe it, but in that instant, when the corpse ball opened its mouth, it looked as if it could even swallow up the stars. Its terrifying power made even the guards in the city far, far away tremble all over. The monster was just way too terrifying! More importantly, it was incredibly fast. The monster was clearly far away to begin with, and yet as soon as it opened its mouth, it had appeared where the regent was a second later, devouring everything around him.

However, just as their morale plummeted, countless golden lights suddenly rained down from the clouds.

The Second Empress endured her urge to rush out. She quickly wiped at the tears around the corners of her eyes, exclaiming, "That's his sword ki! He is still alive!"

A figure descended from the clouds, and countless ripples appeared in the sky behind him. Then, nearly a thousand streaks of gold sword ki condensed in the air, scattering all across the corpse ball like rain. The incredibly sharp sword ki continuously eroded the corpses. However, there were just too many of them in the corpse ball, so even though some were blasted apart by the sword ki, more immediately rushed out to take their place. A million corpses wasn't something that could be destroyed in a short amount of time.

Zu An wiped away his cold sweat. This monster attacked way too quickly, almost like instant movement. More importantly, it had clearly looked sluggish and clumsy, but it had become that fast a second later! That kind of baffling contrast really had nearly caught him off guard.

However, at that instant, 'The Book' in his head had shown him a scene of himself being devoured by a massive mouth. He had already been saved by The Book's warnings many times, so he hadn't hesitated in the slightest, immediately using his exchange and teleportation skills to avoid that bite. Judging from the squirming monster corpses inside its body, he'd been able to tell that being devoured wouldn't end well for him at all.

By now, the corpse ball was beaten badly by the golden sword ki. Even though it could promptly restore its body, it had to exhaust quite a bit of energy each time. Its mouth opened wide, resembling a silent scream. Then, a layer of dense green energy suddenly surged around its entire body. Whenever the sword ki touched the green energy, the swords quickly melted away.

When they saw that Zu An was safe and sound, the soldiers in front of Mengte City had been cheering, but many of their faces suddenly turned green. Then, they fell to the ground and suddenly died.

"What dense and horrifying sword ki!" the Second Empress exclaimed. She was highly experienced and immediately reacted to what was happening. She quickly ordered the chief medical officer over to save them, and instructed the formation masters to put up a formation that would guard against corpse poison. She also had the medicine masters distribute antidotes.

Those with lower cultivations were ordered to move to the center of the city. As for those with higher cultivations, when they circulated their ki, they could gain a certain degree of resistance against the corpse poison.

At the same time, the Second Empress looked at Zu An worriedly. The monster was many miles away, and yet the corpse poison was still this vicious, while he was so close to the monster. Wasn't he thus in even more danger?

Zu An couldn't help but clutch his nose. He almost fainted from the smell. This thing was just too foul-smelling! It was far worse than the herring cans of his previous world. He really wondered just how this monster was able to accelerate the decay of the corpses. The smell of a million rotting monster corpses was absolutely horrifying! No wonder it was able to fend off his sword ki.

The corpse ball stared at Zu An with its two deep eye sockets, as if looking at him. It almost seemed a bit stunned. How could a human like him be perfectly fine when facing such vicious corpse poison?

Still, even though Zu An's body was impervious to poisons, he wasn't immune to stench. The smell really almost made him vomit. He quickly formed a protective barrier around him to block out the air, thus making it a bit easier to endure.

The corpse ball wasn't willing to admit defeat and opened its mouth again. Its entire body immediately wrapped around the space Zu An was in.

This time, Zu An was prepared and immediately shifted locations. At the same time, he created a hydrogen bomb. Since the bomb had been able to blast the monsters into corpses, he figured it would also be able to once again blast the corpses into smithereens.

Unexpectedly, however, after the corpse ball swallowed up the hydrogen bomb, the anticipated explosion didn't happen. Instead, the corpse ball's 'belly' wriggled, and it opened up its mouth again. A lump wrapped in green smoke flew in Mengte City's direction.

The ones defending the front of the city were all strong. They quickly saw that what was wrapped up in the green mist was none other than the extremely powerful explosive the regent had flung out. All of them were horrified.

The Second Empress was even more aghast. She could only quickly order her subordinates to put up a formation, but she knew that if this bomb could kill a million monsters, there was no way their group could possibly withstand it. The corpse ball was too cunning, and had actually redirected the thing right back!

While they were feeling despair, the hydrogen bomb wrapped in green smoke vanished, and in its place was the regent. Then, a terrifying explosion happened in the distance. Unlike before, the mushroom cloud was actually green. It was easy to see just how powerful the monster's poison was.

Those in front of the city didn't know how Zu An had been able to send that iron ball into the distance in such a short time. They all cheered with gratitude, thanking him for saving their lives.

Zu An wiped at his cold sweat. He had never expected this corpse ball to have an ability that could divert his hydrogen bombs. He had almost let the Fiend races' elites get blown to dust. He didn't dare to use any more hydrogen bombs, or else it could be tossed at Mengte City again.

The corpse ball opened its mouth and released cryptic and barely intelligible human speech. "Exchange technique? Such a thing is a divine skill even among the endless cosmos. I didn't expect this weak world to have someone capable of it."

Zu An was shocked. It seemed his keyboard system was even more amazing than he imagined! He wondered just who had created all the skills it contained. However, what left him even more shocked was that this corpse ball could actually speak, and it even spoke the language of this world.

He replied, "I always thought that there was something secretly commanding this army of a million monsters. Now that I think about it, it should be you, right? How should I refer to your distinguished self?"

The corpse ball gave Zu An a look. A while later, it said, "Human, you are very strong and have the right to learn this one's name. I am the Manipulator of Death."

"Manipulator of Death?" Zu An repeated, stunned. "Never heard of you."

The corpse ball paused for a moment. It had never expected to receive such a response.

**You have successfully trolled the Manipulator of Death for +444 +444 +444...**

“Who's stronger between you and the War Priest?” Zu An asked, thinking back to the thing he had encountered over at Copper Gong Mountain. That thing had also been incredibly prideful.

“War Priest?” The corpse ball sneered. “It didn’t even have the qualifications to carry my shoes.”

Zu An was speechless. He had never expected that kind of reply. He could already sense that the pressure this thing gave him was a bit higher.

Even so, the War Priest was also really strong. It hadn't even been able to appear with its full strength because of this world's restriction. That was why Zu An had gotten the opportunity to kill it. If something as strong as the War Priest couldn't even carry this Manipulator of Death's shoes, just how strong was it? The War Priest couldn't even fully appear in this world, so how had this thing done so? Could it be that something had gone wrong in the sealed land?

Suddenly, Mi Li's voice said in Zu An's mind, “Don't let it scare you. This fella is strong, but i's definitely not as strong as you're imagining.”

Zu An was already used to her randomly awakening and quickly asked, “What makes you say that?”

“Do you still remember those things locked up in that great tomb? There are many beings you can't even know the names of, to the point that speaking their names would instantly kill you,” Mi Li said. Her voice was always cold, as if she were a bystander merely observing the world.

Zu An immediately knew what she was saying. He clearly already knew this monster's name, but it was still fine. That meant it wasn't so strong as to be impossible to defeat.

The Manipulator of Death 'stared' at Zu An with its eye sockets, saying, “Human, your strength has won our respect. I will make an exception and give you a chance. As long as you surrender and swear your allegiance to me, we can take over this world together. You will become the ruler of this world and manage this slave world. You can even follow us in dominating more worlds.

Do you really want to be trapped in this insignificant world for the rest of your life?"

When they heard what the Manipulator of Death said, the people in Mengte City were all shocked. They had to admit that its offer was tempting. After experiencing this sealed land war, they already understood the monsters' power. More importantly, there were just too many monsters in a seemingly endless tide. No matter how they thought about it, it was a losing battle. The only question was how long this world could struggle on for. As long as Zu An agreed to the other side's conditions, he could change identities and would no longer have to face this absolute despair.

And yet, what was most important was the allure of the final sentence. Which cultivator in this world didn't want to rise to the next level? The late Fiend Emperor and the human emperor had both been stunning, and yet even after exhausting their entire lives, they still hadn't been able to transcend this world's limits. Now, there was such an opportunity before Zu An, so what choice would he make?

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Chapter 2047: Little Li's Flying Knife, Every Strike With Absolute Precision

Zu An was stunned. He had never expected the other side to actually try to recruit him. He couldn't help but say with a smile, "I don't know whether to be happy or upset that I'm being acknowledged by you."

"Of course you should be happy. There aren't many individuals in this weak world you all live in who can receive our recognition," that corpse ball, no, the Manipulator of Death, said.

Zu An keenly sensed the 'you all' in its words, so he used the chance to ask, "Just how many beings similar to you are there?"

"You will naturally find out once you agree to my conditions. If you don't agree, there is of course no need for you to know," the Manipulator of Death said with a mocking expression, clearly seeing through his thoughts.

"If you aren't even willing to talk about something like this, how am I supposed to come to a good decision?" Zu An replied with a sigh.



“You can stop stalling now. Surrender to us or die. These are the only two choices you have,” the Manipulator of Death said, clearly getting a bit impatient.

“You really aren’t suited to be a lobbyist after all,” Zu An said, putting away his smile. “Even so, I still have a third choice, which is to send you to your ancestors.”

The Manipulator of Death was a bit stunned. The giant corpse ball looked at Zu An. Its monstrous face made of countless corpses smiled in ridicule, saying, “I initially thought that anyone who could reach your level of cultivation would definitely be a smart person, but now, it seems you are still extremely stupid.”

However, Zu An retorted, “I initially thought that beings at your level would be pretty smart, but to be honest, it only seems like you're extremely stupid.”

“Using your human speech, you are only parroting what I just said and trying to anger me through this method. This is hardly an impressive tactic at all,” the Manipulator of Death said, the mockery on its face becoming even stronger.

Zu An chuckled, saying, “That wasn’t a tactic, just a fact. What do you mean, you’ll make me the leader of this world if I follow you? Right now, I’m not only the Fiend races’ regent, but also the human race’s regent. If I were to speak a bit boldly, I could say I already rule this world to begin with. Why would I need to rely on you and play along for the empty promise of a title?”

When they heard that, many people in Mengte City reflexively looked toward the Second Empress. At the very least, she and the new Fiend Emperor were the rulers of the Fiend races, right? The regent’s words seemed a bit excessive right now.

And yet, the Second Empress’ expression remained calm without any sign of displeasure, as if Zu An had stated the obvious.

The others immediately felt relieved. In the end, this was still a world where the strong reigned supreme. With the strength the regent had displayed just now, and the grace he had shown in saving their lives, even if he became the new Fiend Emperor, that wouldn’t be an issue at all.

Just then, Zu An continued, “As for that thing you spoke of about bringing me to other worlds, can’t I just go by myself? Why do I need you to bring me? Also, it’s not as if I haven’t seen even stronger beings before.”

“Ignorant child, do you think the shackles of a world are so easily broken?” The Manipulator of Death was a bit angry now. It continued, “Besides, how could ants of a low-level world like you have possibly witnessed any beings that were stronger than me before?”

**You have successfully trolled the Manipulator of Death for +999 +999 +999...**

Zu An was stunned. He hadn’t expected this thing to get so angry from just some random words.

Just then, all of the corpses that made up the Manipulator of Death’s body opened their mouths, as if they were speaking at the same time. “Since you have chosen death, this one will help you with that goal.”

Countless invisible sound waves rushed at Zu An, who felt a pain in his head. Hundredwarble activated, and the Violet-Gold Alms also shone with golden light. All manner of Buddhist figures appeared, defending against all of the incoming invisible spiritual attacks.

“How does an ant like you have so many strange magical treasures?” the Manipulator of Death wondered, its voice carrying a hint of greed.

Zu An didn’t feel like replying. Since the weapons created from the Rune Weapon Chart couldn’t do much damage against this opponent, he’d just give the real divine weapons a try. A dragon’s cry resounded loud and clear as he drew the Tai’e Sword. A resplendent wave of sword ki rushed into the clouds. The power of this sword alone instantly cleaved the giant corpse ball in half, and all of the corpses completely scattered all over the ground. The sword ki’s attacks didn’t end there, however. Its power continued to leave behind a huge, bottomless ravine that extended several kilometers into the distance.

At the front of the city, there were several fiend guards who cultivated the sword. Even though their cultivation ranks differed, they still had a lot of confidence in their sword skills. And yet, when they saw this sword, a lot of them felt their dao hearts shatter. This was true sword ki! Wasn’t the sword they had practiced all their lives a joke?

Fortunately, there were some who quickly realized that the regent was extraordinary to begin with. He was someone on the same level as the human and fiend emperors. He wasn't someone ordinary cultivators could compete against, and it was only because he was too young that they had all overlooked this reality. They encouraged and consoled each other, eventually managing to prevent the whole group from breaking down.

After being on the receiving end of such terrifying power, the Manipulator of Death should have been completely finished, right? That was what they thought.

However, Zu An wasn't as optimistic as them, because he could sense that the enemy's aura still remained, and it hadn't weakened at all. Sure enough, the corpses once again gathered together, quickly recreating its former appearance.

"It is useless. I cannot be killed, let alone in this weak world you all live in." As they spoke such mocking words, all of the corpses on the Manipulator of Death's face that still had heads aughed visibly.

Despair appeared in the eyes of everyone in Mengte City. That terrifying sword hadn't been able to kill the monster! How were they still supposed to continue fighting?

Zu An secretly asked Mi Li, "Big sis empress, are there really unkillable beings in this world?"

Mi Li didn't even feel like correcting the nickname. When she heard that, she harrumphed and said, "How could there be unkillable beings in this world? If there seems to be one, all that means is that you aren't using the correct method."

Zu An nodded. It was just like the games of his previous world. There were some monsters with physical immunity, others with magic immunity, and still others with specific elemental immunities. But what was this guy's weakness?

He had tried physical and elemental attacks earlier, and yet the enemy returned to normal. As long as the million monster corpses remained, it could still continue to regenerate. He even suspected that the corpse ball was only a temporary form it had. Even if the million corpses were completely erased, it could still potentially reappear in another form.

Moreover, the million corpses weren't so easily defeated either. The most useful weapons against them, the hydrogen bombs, would just be redirected. There was no way he could cut them down one by one with his sword, right? Besides, this thing was made from corpses to begin with, so the Poisonous Prick would clearly be ineffective. On the other hand, this thing couldn't really be considered an undead spirit either. When he used the Primordial Origin Sutra, it hadn't seemed to be too effective. If he fired the Sun Slaying Bow, he would be able to scatter the corpses, but it would just quickly recover. The Human Emperor Seal didn't seem to be the right tool for the job either.

*Wait, the most troublesome thing is its powerful regeneration ability, right...*

The Manipulator of Death laughed and remarked, "You must be feeling despair now, right? That's the reaction you should be having."

As it was talking, the entire corpse ball flew into the air. It opened its mouth wide, and countless monster heads flew out from inside. They all had sinister looks on their faces, as if they would only be satisfied after they took a bite out of Zu An. These monsters had all been mysteriously killed by Zu An, so it was only natural that they were filled with hatred.

Zu An was unfazed. Ripples appeared in the air behind him, releasing countless streaks of golden sword ki. The heads were slashed apart one after another. Immediately after, he swung the Tai'e Sword at the corpse ball again.

When it saw him rush in, the Manipulator of Death's laughter became even louder. It roared, "It's useless! You can't kill me! You'll only tire yourself out to death first!"

A streak of dazzling sword ki flew out from Zu An's hand again, but a white flame was mixed within, and there was even a phoenix projection around it.

"White Lotus Flame? Phoenix Flame? Interesting, but that's not enough to kill me." The Manipulator of Death roared with laughter. It wanted to fully break down this human's fighting spirit and teach him what despair meant.

At the same time, however, it noticed that he seemed to have shot out a throwing knife. Judging from how small it looked, it couldn't help but want to laugh.

*Why is this stupid human trying to use such an insignificant knife on me?*

Any random monster corpse was much bigger than the dagger. Even if it just stood in place without moving, the knife would at most cut off a bit of skin. In contrast, the White Lotus Flame and the Phoenix Flame were a bit tricky.

*Even though they can't kill me, being burned isn't the greatest feeling.*

Just then, the knife landed on its body.

*Wait, something's not right! It's pitifully weak and didn't even manage to destroy a single monster corpse, but it is a bit painful. It seems to be effective at hurting the soul.*

Unfortunately, in its current state, this bit of soul injury didn't do much at all. It thus directed its attention to the blazing fire on the resplendent sword. That way, it could suffer a bit less pain.

However, it seemed that the human had a divine weapon, and the power of that sword was quite frightening. It was cleaved in half again!

*It doesn't matter. I can just recombine to make that human fall into absolute despair.*

*Hm? Wait, why can't I freaking recover?!*

It finally remembered the strange knife from earlier. The corpses on the ground revealed looks of horror and cried out, "Just what kind of throwing knife did you throw earlier?"

Zu An covered his mouth with his fist and coughed a few times, then he slowly said, "Little Li's Flying Knife, every strike with absolute precision."

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Chapter 2048: Main Culprit

"F\*ck you and your Little Li's Flying Knife!" the Manipulator of Death cried. It searched its memory across the various worlds it had experienced, and realized it had never heard of any Little Li's Flying Knife. This human was clearly trying to fool it! Together with the fact that it couldn't restore its body, it was now completely pissed off.

**You have successfully trolled the Manipulator of Death for +999 +999 +999...**

Zu An couldn't help but chuckle. He'd thought that no one in this world would understand what he just said and was feeling a bit gloomy. He hadn't expected this guy to actually quote a line from the movie unwittingly.

The throwing knife naturally wasn't Little Li's Flying Knife, but rather one of the Immortal Beheading Knives he had unexpectedly obtained before. It was something that could wound the soul, while preventing the target from recovering. Zu An's original goal had been to attempt to wound the enemy's soul. After all, in the past, the knife's properties had been especially effective against Zhao Han's primordial spirit.

As for preventing the enemy from recovering, that was a bit trickier. After all, it would only prevent them from recovering for a certain time after they were injured. As long as their regeneration ability was strong enough, it wouldn't make that much of a difference. If he was stronger than his enemy, why would he even need that ability in the first place? As such, he had previously overlooked that property.

But this time, now that he had to face a strange enemy like the Manipulator of Death with its despair-inducing regeneration, the throwing knife just happened to display miraculous effects. The monster corpses were struggling to combine together again, but couldn't gather up like before, and could only squirm helplessly in a disgusting and terrifying manner.

Zu An didn't want any more variables to show up and give it any more opportunities. He immediately took out a hydrogen bomb from the Rune Weapon Chart and tossed it over. Even with his current cultivation, repeatedly creating powerful hydrogen bombs was still quite strenuous. Each time he did it, he felt as if he was being sucked dry. Fortunately, even though the million monsters couldn't give him any more experience points because of this world's own restrictions, they had replenished his energy reserves. That was why he wasn't completely out of energy yet.

The hydrogen bomb descended, but this time, the Manipulator of Death couldn't condense the corpse ball and reflect the bomb.

"Nooo!"

*Boom!*

Dazzling fireworks soared into the air. Countless monster corpses turned to ashes in an instant. Immediately after, Zu An's Tai'e Sword carved out countless resplendent streaks of sword ki through the air. The monster corpses that remained were diced up into tiny pieces.

The frigid, howling winds that swept through the world seemed to have vanished, replaced only by an even colder sword wind. Not even any dregs remained of the monster corpses as everything was erased. Only Zu An alone stood at the center of it all, overlooking the battlefield coldly and decisively.

The scene left everyone in Mengte City speechless. Some younger cultivators were overwhelmed with emotion.

*How great would it be if one day, we could become like the regent...*

When there was only one last corpse left, its head gave Zu An a resentful look, exclaiming, "You dare to kill my incarnation? In the future, I will definitely personally..."

"You really know how to spew bullshit!" Zu An retorted, bringing his sword down before it even finished speaking. The rest of its words disappeared together forever with the corpse.

When Zu An landed at Mengte City, everyone within finally realized that they really had won. The entire city erupted into loud cheers.

"Long live the regent!"

"Long live the Second Empress!"

"We hope that the regent and the Second Empress can bear a son soon!"

..

There was all manner of disgraceful speech mixed in the cheers, but no one felt there was anything wrong with it.

Even the Second Empress herself was now acting like a young lady who was experiencing her first awakening of love. She stood in front of Zu An with a reddened face, and in the end, she couldn't help but throw herself into his arms.

Zu An wrapped an arm around her waist, then held her cheek to kiss her. He had just killed a million monsters, so his mood had definitely been influenced a bit. When he felt her soft and sweet body, he finally recovered a bit of clear-headedness.

The cheers and whistles around him became even louder, as everyone present was extremely excited. As for the late Fiend Emperor, they couldn't care less. The regent had just saved all of their lives, and he had even displayed his incredible might in killing a million monsters. In the end, he had even taken down the incredibly terrifying corpse ball. Forget about the Second Empress, even if he wanted the most beautiful woman of every race, the crowd would offer them up more than willingly. Forget about forcing those women to agree, too; they would be throwing themselves at him all on their own.

There were many women in the city, and they all looked at the Second Empress with jealousy.

*We can't compete against the Second Empress' status, but once she's no longer at the regent's side, we'll try to get close to him then.*

Compared to human women, the Fiend races' women were much more enthusiastic and passionate. However, the Second Empress finally became too embarrassed. When she sensed that Zu An even wanted to go a bit further, she gently pushed him away in alarm. No matter how brazen she was, she couldn't do it in front of so many of her subordinates! She quickly used the excuse that she had to discuss the sealed land's affairs and they left the front of the city. Soon after, the higher level officers of the Fiend races gathered in the city's discussion hall.

Zu An was starting to get a bit embarrassed from everyone's looks of admiration. He quickly cleared his throat and asked, "Just what exactly happened here? How were all of you surrounded by a million monsters?" Even though he had heard a bit from Yu Yanluo, she had already separated from the main force on the way here. She didn't know the details as well as the Second Empress, who was here.

All of them began to speak one after another. "When we learned that something was wrong with the sealed land, we were worried that the monsters might completely break free, so we hurriedly gathered the different races' elites and rushed to Primeval Iron City. There, we learned that the Second Prince already led his troops into the sealed land. At first, we thought that he



wanted to eliminate the disaster forever and take a gamble. We naturally couldn't just sit still as he took a fourth of the empire's elites inside for nothing, so we brought our main army to rescue them.

"And yet, in the end, none of us expected that all of this was a plot to kill us, and that the information we received led us right into the center of the monsters' encirclement. Together with the Little Golden Peng King, Shi Zhentian, and the Hyena race's betrayals, we were almost completely wiped out. It was thanks to the Second Empress' brilliant leadership that we were able to break free from the encirclement, thus stalling for long enough until the regent's arrival."

The Second Empress said with a bitter smile, "I would like to thank everyone for bravely attacking the enemy and using brilliant strategies. I was only able to be of some minor aid."

"Your highness is too humble."

...

Zu An frowned slightly.

*There really was something wrong with the Second Prince, as expected. Even so, why haven't I seen him or his troops at all?*

"By the way, how did the regent find this place?" Hu Qianxiao asked with a smile. The others were also curious, because this sealed land was unimaginably large. They had already been in absolute despair and really hadn't thought he would be able to find them.

"At first, I tried to contact the Second Empress through the recording mirror but failed. I realized that something likely happened on this side..." Zu An began.

When they heard what Zu An said, the officers' eyes darted between the two, and they had knowing smiles on their faces.

The Second Empress' face heated up. She gave them a glare and said, "He is also the human race's regent, so we were just talking about proper affairs."

The officers thought to themselves, *Like hell we'll believe you. Judging from how the two of you were glued together earlier, your conversations have probably reached the deepest subjects.*

Zu An coughed lightly and said, "Later, when I learned of the strange things that were happening, I came to Primeval Iron City. When I entered the sealed land, I ran into Yanluo... Ahem, into the Medusa Queen. That was how I learned of your location."

The officers gave the Second Empress approving looks and said, "Back then, her highness stood her ground and paid a huge price to send out the Medusa Queen. Many people objected to her decision back then, but it turns out we were all short-sighted like blind mice!"

The Mouse race's leader slammed a chair and cried out, "Hey, I'm still here, you know?!"

Those present all roared with laughter. Their moods had clearly improved a lot after their victory in battle.

Zu An suddenly thought of something and asked, "By the way, why did so many monsters appear here? If they were this powerful, they should have already left Primeval Iron City a long time ago, right?"

When she heard him say that, the Second Empress' expression became grim. She said, "We also looked into some information since then. I reckon that the Second Prince broke some of the seals here, which led to the outbreak of countless monsters. If we cannot repair the seal promptly, even more monsters might appear rapidly. At that point, the situation will completely collapse."

Zu An was speechless.

*Second Prince, I'm going to f\*ck your mom!*

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## Chapter 2049: Sacred Widow Body

As soon as that thought arose, Zu An reflexively gave the Second Empress a look. To a certain extent, the Second Prince also had to call the Second Empress mother, so he wasn't exactly wrong...

The Second Empress gave him a confused look. She just felt that the way that he was looking at her was a bit strange, but she was too embarrassed to ask him in front of so many people.

Zu An quickly focused his thoughts and asked, "Right, where is the true sealed land?"

"It should be even deeper inside than Mengte City. As for exactly where it is, I don't know," the Second Empress said. She quickly realized that stopping there was a bit inappropriate, so she quickly added, "We were baited into this dangerous situation by the Second Prince as soon as we entered this place, and then we were betrayed by the Little Golden Peng King's group. We were constantly running for our lives and didn't have a chance to investigate any of these things."

Zu An expressed his understanding. The fact that she could still help so many people escape even after falling into all kinds of traps, still managing to preserve most of their military strength, was already the most she could possibly do.

...

Then, they all began to enthusiastically discuss what happened. They summarized all of their respective clans' records and knowledge on the sealed land, then cross-referenced that with what they had seen and heard personally. In the end, there were three areas that were the most likely locations for the real sealed land. One was to the north of Mengte City, one was to the northwest, and one was to the west. Furthermore, they were all largely unexplored areas that had to be investigated one by one.

Zu An wanted the Second Empress to bring her troops out of the sealed land, and planned to investigate those areas himself. After all, the army had fought through bitter battles for many days already, and almost everyone present had some injuries; several were extremely grave. It had been a long time since they had any sleep, and they were at their physical limits. They needed time to rest and regroup to recover their fighting strength.

Even so, the Second Empress and the other clan leaders didn't agree to the plan. After all, this was the Fiend races' sealed land, and Zu An was a human. They were already really grateful that he had saved their lives, so how could they let him face these dangers alone?

After talking for a long time, they finally reached an agreement. They would first send the most heavily injured individuals out of the sealed land while the rest recuperated in Mengte City, prepared to support Zu An at any time. Zu An knew that his individual power was limited, and that often, he did need the help of a large army. As such, he didn't persist with his previous idea.

Zu An had initially been prepared to head out and investigate the different areas, but the Second Empress urged him to stay. He had just experienced a bloody battle and also needed rest. He was about to refuse, but in the end, when he saw the concern in her eyes, he agreed. Even though he'd been able to replenish his energy through that battle, the mental fatigue and tension were significant, especially after slaughtering so many creatures. Fortunately, they'd all been savage monsters who moved on instinct, or else even his dao heart could have wavered.

...

Soon after, he was given the best room in the city to rest. Inside the room, there was a formation prepared with the best ki stones, one that helped those inside recover from their injuries and helped them replenish their internal ki.

After seeing off the others, the Second Empress used the excuse that she still had something to discuss with Zu An to stay behind.

"What was it that you didn't feel comfortable talking about in front of the others?" Zu An asked with a grave expression. Could it be that there were still more traitors hidden among those guys?

The Second Empress looked around. With her back to the door, she backed up slightly to close it before saying, "It's something we can't let those guys know." Then, she rushed straight into his arms and warmly caressed his face, neck, and shoulders, continuing, "You are way too nervous. Your entire body is so tense. That's not a good thing when there are still so many unknown dangers ahead of us."

Zu An laughed helplessly and said, "It's not that I'm nervous, but rather that I'm really not used to the feeling of killing so much."

"That's because deep down, you're still a warm and kind person," the Second Empress said, looking up at him with her radiant eyes. "Someone like you almost doesn't seem as if you grew up in this cruel world of cultivation. But it's precisely because you're like this that you're special, and that's why I'm willing to trust and share everything with you without holding anything back at all."

There had actually been regents in the history of the Fiend races, but they were almost always influential ministers who held all authority within their grasp. In the past, the court's empress and child emperor had often needed to join together to fight and scheme, to barely preserve imperial authority. Zu An was the only regent who was completely different, not caring about authority at all.

At first, the Second Empress, who had already lived in the palace for a long time, had secretly prepared some countermeasures. However, after spending more time with Zu An, she discovered that she had actually been overthinking things. As a result, from then on, she discovered that she had completely fallen into enemy hands. She'd thought that it was just a political ploy, but she seemed to have really experienced the taste of love herself...

On the surface, it seemed as if she'd won everything. An innocent and powerful regent was fully devoted to protecting her and her son, after all. However, she knew she had actually lost bitterly in this ordeal, and even given up her whole self, at that.

However, when she realized those things, her expression only became even warmer. Her finger gently moved across Zu An's lips and she sweetly said, "I stayed behind to help you with the leftover fierceness inside of you, to help you vent out all of your negative emotions. I don't want someone like you to be affected by such emotions..."

After the Medusa Queen returned, the discussion as to who the most beautiful woman was became up for debate, but the most alluring woman was still definitely the Second Empress. Even Bluefield Country's Tushan Yu, who was known for her charm, was a bit inferior.

In the past, whenever they saw the aged late Fiend Emperor sit together with the young and captivating Second Empress in the throne hall, all of the men had wondered if the late Fiend Emperor could still do the deed. They all wanted to take his place, and whenever they greeted the Second Empress, they hadn't been able to help but dream about her...

That was the effect of just seeing her from a distance, so how could it compare to having her soft and fragrant body right in one's arms while she continued to murmur words of affection?

Zu An couldn't hold back at all anymore. He pushed her against the wall and pressed up against her back.

The Second Empress was alarmed. She hadn't expected him to be so rough! A hint of worry flickered in her eyes. It seemed there really were too many negative emotions left over from that battlefield. When she thought of that, she felt more and more pity for him. She used her warmest and most gentle side to comfort him.

In that instant, she even felt a bit proud. Everyone had witnessed that battle on the city gate tower, and the most arrogant experts had all asserted confidently that no one in this world could surpass the regent in matters of the sword. They had all spoken about how unstoppable it was, and how no one could stand in its way, and doing so would only result in destruction.

And yet, she was biting her lip right now. Even the sharpest sword had a sheath that suited it, and she was the most suitable sheath for this man.

But shortly after, her eyes rolled back, and she realized that it was still too early for her to be pleased with herself. That exceptional sword was thrusting in and out ruthlessly; no others could compare. Trying to contain that exceptional and unrivaled sword ki all by herself didn't seem to be that easy.

...

Xiao Yi, who was guarding the door outside, blushed.

*Does this woman have no sense of shame? Thank goodness I had those guards all get lost earlier, or else there would be rumors about their passionate affair circulating all throughout the Fiend races.*

At the same time, she was also quite shocked. After all, in their clan, the Second Empress was known for her special constitution. A hermit had once passed by their clan in the past. When he saw her, he had been extremely shocked, declaring that she possessed the legendary Sacred Widow Body. Such a constitution was rather ominous for her husband, as it portended that her husband was destined for a bad end. Its other effect was that her body was special. Put simply, she was a woman among women. Even the strongest

man would immediately become completely defenseless against her and be unable to hold themselves back at all.

In the past, the old clan chief had chased the hermit away with a darkened expression. Unfortunately, the rumors of the Sacred Widow Body had still spread like wildfire. It was to the extent that the young elites of the clan had all been a bit worried when they heard that. Even though they admired her appearance, they had all worried about her special cursed body.

In the end, when the late Fiend Emperor passed by the clan and saw her stunning beauty, he had immediately decided to make her his new wife. At the time, he was advised by many people who mentioned her special constitution. They had worried that it would be disadvantageous for him. However, the late Fiend Emperor had dismissed those warnings with a laugh. He hadn't thought that someone as powerful as himself would need to fear such imaginary things.

But later on, sure enough, he had met a bitter end!

Xiao Yi wasn't all that worried about the regent being cursed, actually. After all, he wasn't the Second Empress' husband, and with their status, they wouldn't announce their relationship to the world. That meant her constitution's issues didn't matter.

Rather, she was shocked that the regent was actually not influenced by the other special trait of the Second Empress! Why did it sound as if it was the Second Empress who was completely defenseless and begging for mercy?

...

After an unknown amount of time passed, the Second Empress snuggled up in Zu An's arms, her entire body soft and weak. As she looked at Zu An, her eyes were full of tender feelings as she said, "It's alright, you don't need to hold yourself back. I want to bear your child."

Zu An frowned, saying, "You don't need to test me like this. The young emperor is still alive and healthy. I have no intentions of changing him out."

The Second Empress shook her head. Her beautiful hair created a stark contrast as it fell onto her jade-like skin. She said, "I'm not testing you. I only want to help you by bearing a son. It's unrelated to status or authority. I've

discovered that I can't stop myself from loving you anymore. If I can't have a child with you, I'll regret it for the rest of my life!"

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Chapter 2050: Undaunted

How could Zu An still hold back when he heard her words filled with endearment? He held her tightly, and another round of passion began.

The Second Empress held the man she loved tightly. In that instant, it was impossible to know if she was crying or smiling.

...

Two hours later, when Zu An left the room, he felt incredibly refreshed. He was no longer affected by the battle against the monsters and had completely recovered to his peak state.

When he left, he saw Xiao Yi's astonished expression. He assumed it was because she was surprised by his ability to defeat a million monsters, but it had already been so long since then, so why was she still so shocked? Of course, he couldn't really pry too much either. He nodded toward her slightly, then flew straight toward the first of the possible locations for the true sealed land.

Xiao Yi went inside the room. When she saw that the Second Empress was wrapped under covers and smiling foolishly to herself for who knew what reason, she rolled her eyes in annoyance and said, "Sigh, thank goodness no one else saw you like this, with an expression that looks as if you were played with until you broke."

The Second Empress looked at her. Their relationship was really good to begin with, so she didn't go so far as to get upset. She replied, "Xiao Yi, you know fully well just how hard it is to break me from playing. How can I not feel happy?"

Xiao Yi was speechless.

*Fine, you win. It's impossible to win against the shameless.*



But she still couldn't endure her curiosity, asking, "That special constitution of yours... didn't affect him?"

The Second Empress thought of something and blushed, saying, "His constitution is definitely special as well. He was the only one affecting me. How could I do anything to him?"

Xiao Yi stared blankly for a moment. In the end, she could only say with a sigh, "The regent is unrivaled after all."

"He is indeed unrivaled," the Second Empress said, her beautiful eyes swirling with brilliance.

...

Meanwhile, on the outskirts of the Sealed Land, inside Primeval Iron City, Kong Nanwu asked the Peacock Wise King with a worried expression, "Father king, do you think the Second Empress and the others will be able to come out safely?"

The Peacock Wise King laughed and replied, "What you are really interested in is whether or not the regent will be able to come out safely, right?"

"Father~" Kong Nanwu pouted playfully. She pinched her father's arm in annoyance.

"Alright, alright, your father will stop the nonsense." There was still a bit of a smile left in the Peacock Wise King's eyes.

Kong Nanwu's face was red as she said, "That's right, I do have a good impression of the regent, but it's still far from liking him. He has so many women around him, so father, you shouldn't randomly play matchmaker."

"So the problem is that he has too many women around him, hm?" the Peacock Wise King replied, then said seriously, "You are the Peacock race's princess, someone with a distinguished status. Your appearance isn't any inferior to others either, and you're smart to top it all off. How could an ordinary woman possibly win against you?"

Kong Nanwu was speechless.

*The main part of what I said was in the first half! Why did my father only hear the second half?*

...

While the father and daughter were bickering with each other, a bell suddenly rang urgently. The Peacock Wise King's big smile disappeared, and he darted out.

Kong Nanwu became serious as she followed behind him. This was the alarm for an enemy attack. Could it be that the monsters had emerged from the Sealed Land?

*Doesn't that mean everything bodes ill for big brother Zu?*

Her footsteps quickened when she thought of that.

...

Soon after, they arrived at the front of the city. They saw an army outside. Kong Nanwu couldn't help but sigh in relief when she saw that it wasn't the monsters. Could it be that big brother Zu had saved the Second Empress' army and returned?

She quickly craned her neck to get a better look. She was a bit unfamiliar with the members of this army. All of them had injuries on their bodies, with blood dripping from their bandages. The ones who could still remain standing actually had it better, though, because there were many who were even missing arms and legs. Some of them were lying on stretchers, and it was unknown if they were dead or alive. This was clearly an army that had experienced a bloody battle. Furthermore, from the looks of it, they were on the brink of collapse.

A figure appeared at the head of the army and hollered in their direction, "I am the Second Prince! Hurry and let us enter the city to rest and recover!"

"The Second Prince?" those who had come from the city exclaimed in shock. They quickly looked at him and saw that it was indeed him!

The Second Prince was no longer dignified in bearing like before. His cloak was in tatters, reduced to just a few strips of cloth. No one knew where his helmet had gone either. His hair bun was already completely undone, and

blood-matted hair scattered down. There was quite a bit of hair stuck to his face. There was a massive wound in his chest, too; even his armor seemed to have almost been cleaved in half by a blade. He tottered unsteadily as he stood there. It was clear that he was seriously injured.

“Second Prince, it really is you?” the Peacock Wise King exclaimed, feeling surprised but happy. They had come all the way here precisely to save the Second Prince, and it had been so long since they last received information about him. He hadn’t expected the prince to actually appear here.

“Peacock Wise King! Who else could it be? It is indeed me,” the Second Prince said, seeming pleasantly surprised to see him, as if he finally felt safe after seeing a familiar face.

“Peacock Wise King, please hurry and let us in!” many soldiers behind the Second Prince shouted excitedly.

Kong Nanwu hurriedly reminded her father in a soft voice, “Father king, be careful of a potential scheme!”

The Peacock Wise King nodded slightly. He made a hand gesture to his subordinates behind the wall, and some soldiers went down to pass on a message to make preparations. He then looked outside the city and asked, “Second Prince, why are you here? Where is the Second Empress and the other races’ troops?”

“Please say no more... We suffered from a monster ambush in the sealed land and all of us fought bitterly, but the enemy was too great in number. The other troops were quickly driven off. We only managed to break out of their encirclement after losing most of our soldiers. We came this time precisely to ask the wise king for reinforcements. I hope you can lead the troops to save the Second Empress!” the Second Prince replied. He even took out a blade and stabbed it into the icy ground next to him, bitterly cursing those blasted monsters.

The Peacock Wise King’s brows furrowed slightly as he said, “But the order I received was to hold Primeval Iron City no matter the circumstances, and act as the Fiend races’ final line of defense. We cannot let any monsters through.”

The Second Prince urgently said, “The different races’ elites are all in deep trouble right now! If we don’t swiftly send people to rescue them, and all of

them are wiped out, our Fiend races will also be finished! How can we stop the endless monsters by relying on the trifling Primeval Iron City alone?"

The Peacock Wise King said gravely, "This is a serious matter, so we need to take our time in making a decision..."

The Second Prince replied even more anxiously, "Speed is a crucial asset in war! The different clans' elites might die at any time in the sealed land, so how can we still take our time in making decisions?"

The Peacock Wise King was a bit hesitant. He also knew fully well that if the troops the Second Empress commanded were completely wiped out, there was no way he could hold this city.

Suddenly, Kong Nanwu said, "Then we must ask you to enter the city first. We can discuss the exact details together."

The Second Prince was overjoyed, exclaiming, "Thank you so much, little sister Nanwu!" Then, he commanded his subordinates to prepare to enter the city. Many soldiers immediately cheered.

However, Kong Nanwu added just then, "Second Prince, please do not misunderstand. We are only inviting you alone into the city."

The Second Prince's expression immediately darkened. He asked, "What is the meaning of this?"

Kong Nanwu had an apologetic expression as she said, "I hope that the Second Prince doesn't take offense. We bear the heavy responsibility of defending this city, so we cannot afford even the slightest risk."

The Second Prince retorted furiously, "Then are you saying that my subordinates will treat you all unfavorably if we enter the city? They've fought bravely against the enemy on the front lines, and most of their brothers have died. Now, they carry severe injuries, but this is the treatment they get in return? Are you not scared of ruining their morale?"

The soldiers under his command immediately became noisy. Many who had bad tempers even cursed her for not having any conscience.

The prince's words were extremely provocative. Even many soldiers in the city couldn't help but have troubled expressions.

Kong Nanwu's expression was cold as she said, "You are a famous general, so you should understand that we cannot rashly allow people into the city in this kind of situation. This little sister will definitely personally apologize to the soldiers after, and the Peacock race will also prepare generous gifts for everyone."

"Their lives were nearly lost, so who wants your gifts?!" the Second Prince cursed. But no matter what he said, Kong Nanwu remained unmoved.

The Peacock Wise King had actually been a bit moved at first, but he had always trusted his daughter's wit. He opened his mouth, but didn't say anything in the end.

Suddenly, the Second Prince seemed to have thought of something. He quickly waved his hand backward. Soon after, a charming figure emerged from their camp. He said, "If you all don't trust me, then you should trust the Medusa Queen, right? She is extremely close to the regent, and she is also the Second Empress' confidant. She fought together at the Second Empress' side, so there is no way she would lie to all of you, right?"

Then, he secretly sent Yu Yanluo a voice transmission. "If you do not speak the way we agreed, then forget about the lives of your servants, even the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider inside you will immediately activate. Then, you will become a walking corpse without any will of your own. I do not believe you wish to see that happen."

Yu Yanluo's expression remained calm. She nodded slightly. Even though the other side had treated her respectfully in a general sense, how could they not be wary at all against their group of captives? The prince had fed her the Heart-Devouring Demon Spider poison when she was off guard, to use precisely for this moment.

Kong Nanwu was a bit moved too. She called out, "Medusa Queen? Are the Second Empress and the Regent safe?"

Yu Yanluo took a deep breath and said slowly, "The regent is safe, but I am not certain about the Second Empress."

The Second Prince grinned. The worse the Second Empress' situation seemed, the better. That way, the people inside would be in a rush to send out reinforcements to save her.

“What happened to the Second Empress?” the Peacock Wise King hurriedly asked.

Suddenly, Yu Yanluo quickly said, “The Second Prince has betrayed the Fiend races and colluded with the monsters. All of you absolutely must not open up the city!”

The Second Prince, who had been feeling proud of himself, immediately felt his smile freeze on his face. He was shocked and furious!

*How dare she?!*

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